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IMMIGRANTS' FIRST VIEW OF AMERICA

From the painting by C. W. Jefferys

# IMMIGRATION AND LABOR

PART 1: OUR FOREIGNERS

BY SAMUEL P. ORTH

PART 2: THE ARMIES OF LABOR

BY SAMUEL P. ORTH



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PART I  
OUR FOREIGNERS

A CHRONICLE  
OF AMERICANS IN THE MAKING  
BY  
SAMUEL P. ORTH

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# OUR FOREIGNERS

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## CHAPTER I

### OPENING THE DOOR

LONG before men awoke to the vision of America, the Old World was the scene of many stupendous migrations. One after another, the Goths, the Huns, the Saracens, the Turks, and the Tatars, by the sheer tidal force of their numbers threatened to engulf the ancient and medieval civilization of Europe. But neither in the motives prompting them nor in the effect they produced, nor yet in the magnitude of their numbers, will such migrations bear comparison with the great exodus of European peoples which in the course of three centuries has made the United States of America. That movement of races — first across the sea and then across the land to yet another sea, which set in with the English occupation of Virginia in 1607 and which

has continued from that day to this an almost ceaseless stream of millions of human beings seeking in the New World what was denied them in the Old — has no parallel in history.

It was not until the seventeenth century that the door of the wilderness of North America was opened by Englishmen; but, if we are interested in the circumstances and ideas which turned Englishmen thither, we must look back into the wonderful sixteenth century — and even into the fifteenth, for it was only five or six years after the great Christopher's discovery, that the Cabots, John and Sebastian, raised the Cross of St. George on the North American coast. Two generations later, when the New World was pouring its treasure into the lap of Spain and when all England was pulsating with the new and noble life of the Elizabethan Age, the sea captains of the Great Queen challenged the Spanish monarch, defeated his Great Armada, and unfurled the English flag, symbol of a changing era, in every sea.

The political and economic thought of the sixteenth century was conducive to imperial expansion. The feudal fragments of kingdoms were being fused into a true nationalism. It was the day of the mercantilists, when gold and silver were

given a grotesquely exaggerated place in the national economy and self-sufficiency was deemed to be the goal of every great nation. Freed from the restraint of rivals, the nation sought to produce its own raw material, control its own trade, and carry its own goods in its own ships to its own markets. This economic doctrine appealed with peculiar force to the people of England. England was very far from being self-sustaining. She was obliged to import salt, sugar, dried fruits, wines, silks, cotton, potash, naval stores, and many other necessary commodities. Even of the fish which formed a staple food on the English workman's table, two-thirds of the supply was purchased from the Dutch. Moreover, wherever English traders sought to take the products of English industry, mostly woolen goods, they were met by handicaps — tariffs, Sound dues, monopolies, exclusions, retaliations, and even persecutions.

So England was eager to expand under her own flag. With the fresh courage and buoyancy of youth she fitted out ships and sent forth expeditions. And while she shared with the rest of the Europeans the vision of India and the Orient, her "gentlemen adventurers" were not long in seeing the possibilities that lay concealed beyond the

inviting harbors, the navigable rivers, and the forest-covered valleys of North America. With a willing heart they believed their quaint chronicler, Richard Hakluyt, when he declared that America could bring "*as great a profit to the Realme of England as the Indes to the King of Spain,*" that "*golde, silver, copper, leade and perales in aboundaunce*" had been found there: also "*precious stones, as turquoises and emauraldes; spices and drugges; silke worms fairer than ours in Europe; white and red cotton; infinite multitude of all kind of fowles; excellent vines in many places for wines; the soyle apte to beare olyves for oyle; all kinds of fruited; all kindes of odoriferous trees and date trees, cypresses, and cedars; and in New-foundelande. aboundaunce of pines and firr trees to make mastes and deale boards, pitch, tar, rosen; hempe for cables and cordage; and upp within the Graunde Baye excedinge quantitie of all kinde of precious furies.*" Such a catalogue of resources led him to conclude that "*all the commodities of our olde decayed and daungerous trades in all Europe, Africa and Asia haunted by us, may in short space and for little or nothinge, in a manner be had in that part of America which lieth between 30 and 60 degrees of northerly latitude.*"

Even after repeated expeditions had discounted

the exuberant optimism of this description, the Englishmen's faith did not wane. While for many years there lurked in the mind of the Londoner, the hope that some of the products of the Levant might be raised in the fertile valleys of Virginia, the practical English temperament none the less began promptly to appease itself with the products of the vast forests, the masts, the tar and pitch, the furs; with the fish from the coast waters, the abundant cod, herring, and mackerel; nor was it many years before tobacco, indigo, sugar, cotton, maize, and other commodities brought to the merchants of England a great American commerce.

The first attempts to found colonies in the country by Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Walter Raleigh were pitiable failures. But the settlement on the James in 1607 marked the beginning of a nation. What sort of nation? What race of people? Sir Walter Raleigh, with true English tenacity, had said after learning of the collapse of his own colony, "I shall yet live to see it an English nation." The new nation certainly was English in its foundation, whatever may be said of its superstructure. Virginia, New England, Maryland, the Carolinas, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Georgia were begun by Englishmen; and New England, Virginia,

and Maryland remained almost entirely English throughout the seventeenth century and well into the eighteenth. These colonies reproduced, in so far as their strange and wild surroundings permitted, the towns, the estates, and the homes of Englishmen of that day. They were organized and governed by Englishmen under English customs and laws; and the Englishman's constitutional liberties were their boast until the colonists wrote these rights and privileges into a constitution of their own. "Foreigners" began early to straggle into the colonies. But not until the eighteenth century was well under way did they come in appreciable numbers, and even then the great bulk of these non-English newcomers were from the British Isles — of Welsh, Scotch, Irish, and Scotch-Irish extraction.

These colonies took root at a time when profound social and religious changes were occurring in England. Churchmen and dissenters were at war with each other; autocracy was struggling to survive the representative system; and agrarianism was contending with a newly created capitalism for economic supremacy. The old order was changing. In vain were attempts made to stay progress by labor laws and poor laws and corn laws. The laws rather served to fill the highways with vagrants,



vagabonds, mendicants, beggars, and worse. There was a general belief that the country was overpopulated. For the restive, the discontented, the ambitious, as well as for the undesirable surplus, the new colonies across the Atlantic provided a welcome outlet.

To the southern plantations were lured those to whom land-owning offered not only a means of livelihood but social distinction. As word was brought back of the prosperity of the great estates and of the limitless areas awaiting cultivation, it tempted in substantial numbers those who were dissatisfied with their lot: the yeoman who saw no escape from the limitations of his class, either for himself or for his children; the younger son who disdained trade but was too poor to keep up family pretensions; professional men, lawyers, and doctors, even clergymen, who were ambitious to become landed gentlemen; all these felt the irresistible call of the New World.

The northern colonies were, on the other hand, settled by townfolk, by that sturdy middle class which had wedged its way socially between the aristocracy and the peasantry, which asserted itself politically in the Cromwellian Commonwealth and later became the industrial master of trade

and manufacture. These hard-headed dissenters founded New England. They built towns and almost immediately developed a profitable trade and manufacture. With a goodly sprinkling of university men among them, they soon had a college of their own. Indeed, Harvard graduated its first class as early as 1642.

Supplementing these pioneers, came mechanics and artisans eager to better their condition. Of the serving class, only a few came willingly. These were the "free-willers" or "redemptioners," who sold their services usually for a term of five years to pay for their passage money. But the great mass of unskilled labor necessary to clear the forests and do the other hard work so plentiful in a pioneer land came to America under duress. Kidnaping or "spiriting" achieved the perfection of a fine art under the second Charles. Boys and girls of the poorer classes, those wretched waifs who thronged the streets of London and other towns, were hustled on board ships and virtually sold into slavery for a term of years. It is said that in 1670 alone ten thousand persons were thus kidnaped; and one kidnaper testified in 1671 that he had sent five hundred persons a year to the colonies for twelve years and another that he had sent 840 in one year.

Transportation of the idle poor was another common source for providing servants. In 1663 an act was passed by Parliament empowering Justices of the Peace to send rogues, vagrants, and "sturdy beggars" to the colonies. These men belonged to the class of the unfortunate rather than the vicious and were the product of a passing state of society, though criminals also were deported. Virginia and other colonies vigorously protested against this practice, but their protests were ignored by the Crown. When, however, it is recalled that in those years the list of capital offenses was appalling in length, that the larceny of a few shillings was punishable by death, that many of the victims were deported because of religious differences and political offenses, then the stigma of crime is erased. And one does not wonder that some of these transported persons rose to places of distinction and honor in the colonies and that many of them became respected citizens. Maryland, indeed, recruited her schoolmasters from among their ranks.

Indentured service was an institution of that time, as was slavery. The lot of the indentured servant was not ordinarily a hard one. Here and there masters were cruel and inhuman. But in a new country where hands were so few and work

so abundant, it was wisdom to be tolerant and humane. Servants who had worked out their time usually became tenants or freeholders, often moving to other colonies and later to the interior beyond the "fall line," where they became pioneers in their turn.

The most important and influential influx of non-English stock into the colonies was the copious stream of Scotch-Irish. Frontier life was not a new experience to these hardy and remarkable people. Ulster, when they migrated thither from Scotland in the early part of the seventeenth century, was a wild moorland, and the Irish were more than unfriendly neighbors. Yet these transplanted Scotch changed the fens and mires into fields and gardens; in three generations they had built flourishing towns and were doing a thriving manufacture in linens and woollens. Then England, in her mercantilist blindness, began to pass legislation that aimed to cut off these fabrics from English competition. Soon thousands of Ulster artisans were out of work. Nor was their religion immune from English attack, for these Ulstermen were Presbyterians. These civil, religious, and economic persecutions thereupon drove to America an ethnic strain that has had an influence upon the character of the nation far out

of proportion to its relative numbers. In the long list of leaders in American politics and enterprise and in every branch of learning, Scotch-Irish names are common.

There had been some trade between Ulster and the colonies, and a few Ulstermen had settled on the eastern shore of Maryland and in Virginia before the close of the seventeenth century. Between 1714 and 1720, fifty-four ships arrived in Boston with immigrants from Ireland. They were carefully scrutinized by the Puritan exclusionists. Cotton Mather wrote in his diary on August 7, 1718: "But what shall be done for the great number of people that are transporting themselves thither from ye North of Ireland?" And John Winthrop, speaking of twenty ministers and their congregations that were expected the same year, said, "I wish their coming so over do not prove fatall in the End." They were not welcome, and had, evidently, no intention of burdening the towns. Most of them promptly moved on beyond the New England settlements.

The great mass of Scotch-Irish, however, came to Pennsylvania, and in such large numbers that James Logan, the Secretary of the Province, wrote to the Proprietors in 1729: "It looks as if Ireland

is to send all its inhabitants hither, for last week not less than six ships arrived, and every day two or three arrive also."<sup>1</sup> These colonists did not remain in the towns but, true to their traditions, pushed on to the frontier. They found their way over the mountain trails into the western part of the colony; they pushed southward along the fertile plateaus that terrace the Blue Ridge Mountains and offer a natural highway to the South; into Virginia, where they possessed themselves of the beautiful Shenandoah Valley; into Maryland and the Carolinas; until the whole western frontier, from Georgia to New York and from Massachusetts to Maine, was the skirmish line of the Scotch-Irish taking possession of the wilderness.

The rebellions of the Pretenders in Scotland in 1715 and 1745 and the subsequent break-up of the clan system produced a considerable migration to the colonies from both the Highlands and the Lowlands. These new colonists settled largely in the Carolinas and in Maryland. The political

<sup>1</sup> In 1773 and 1774 over thirty thousand came. In the latter year Benjamin Franklin estimated the population of Pennsylvania at 350,000, of which number one-third was thought to be Scotch-Irish. John Fiske states that half a million, all told, arrived in the colonies before 1776, "making not less than one-sixth part of our population at the time of the Revolution."



prisoners, of whom there were many in consequence of the rebellions, were sold into servicc, usually for a term of fourteen years. In Pennsylvania the Welsh founded a number of settlements in the neighborhood of Philadelphia. There were Irish servants in all the colonies and in Maryland many Irish Catholics joined their fellow Catholics from England.

In 1683 a group of religious refugees from the Rhineland founded Germantown, near Philadelphia. Soon other German communities were started in the neighboring counties. Chief among these German sectarians were the Mennonites, frequently called the German Quakers, so nearly did their religious peculiarities match those of the followers of Penn; the Dunkers, a Baptist sect, who seem to have come from Germany boot and baggage, leaving not one of their number behind; and the Moravians, whose missionary zeal and gentle demeanor have made them beloved in many lands. The peculiar religious devotions of the sectarians still left them time to cultivate their inclination for literature and music. There were a few distinguished scholars among them and some of the finest examples of early American books bear the imprint of their presses.

This modest beginning of the German invasion was soon followed by more imposing additions. The repeated strategic devastations of the Rhenish Palatinate during the French and Spanish wars reduced the peasantry to beggary, and the medieval social stratification of Germany reduced them to virtual serfdom, from which America offered emancipation. Queen Anne invited the harassed peasants of this region to come to England, whence they could be transferred to America. Over thirty thousand took advantage of the opportunity in the years 1708 and 1709.<sup>1</sup> Some of them found occupation in England and others in Ireland, but the majority migrated, some to New York, where they settled in the Mohawk Valley, others to the Carolinas, but far more to Pennsylvania, where, with an instinct born of generations of contact with the soil, they sought out the most promising areas in the limestone valleys of the eastern part of that colony, cleared the land, built their solid homes and ample barns, and clung to their language, customs, and religion so tenaciously that to this day their descendants are called "Pennsylvania Dutch."

After 1717 multitudes of German peasants were

<sup>1</sup> John Fiske: *The Dutch and Quaker Colonies in America*, vol. II, p. 351.



lured to America by unscrupulous agents called "new-landers" or "soul-stealers," who, for a commission paid by the shipmaster, lured the peasant to sell his belongings, scrape together or borrow what he could, and migrate. The agents and captains then saw to it that few arrived in Philadelphia out of debt. As a result the immigrants were sold to "soul-drivers," who took them to the interior and indentured them to farmers, usually of their own race. These redemptioners, as they were called, served from three to five years and generally received fifty acres of land at the expiration of their service.

On the revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in 1685 French Protestants fled in vast numbers to England and to Holland. Thence many of them found their way to America, but very few came hither directly from France. South Carolina, Virginia, New York, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts were favored by those noble refugees, who included in their numbers not only skilled artisans and successful merchants but distinguished scholars and professional men in whose veins flowed some of the best blood of France. They readily identified themselves with the industries and aspirations of the colonies and at once

became leaders in the professional and business life in their communities. In Boston, in Charleston, in New York, and in other commercial centers, the names of streets, squares, and public buildings attest their prominence in trade and politics. Few names are more illustrious than those of Paul Revere, Peter Faneuil, and James Bowdoin of Massachusetts; John Jay, Nicholas Bayard, Stephen DeLancey of New York; Elias Boudinot of New Jersey; Henry Laurens and Francis Marion of South Carolina. Like the Scotch-Irish, these French Protestants and their descendants have distinguished themselves for their capacity for leadership.

The Jews came early to New York, and as far back as 1691 they had a synagogue in Manhattan. The civil disabilities then so common in Europe were not enforced against them in America, except that they could not vote for members of the legislature. As that body itself declared in 1737, the Jews did not possess the parliamentary franchise in England, and no special act had endowed them with this right in the colonies. The earliest representatives of this race in America came to New Amsterdam with the Dutch and were nearly all Spanish and Portuguese Jews, who had found refuge in Holland after their wholesale expulsion

from the Iberian peninsula in 1492. Rhode Island, too, and Pennsylvania had a substantial Jewish population. The Jews settled characteristically in the towns and soon became a factor in commercial enterprise. It is to be noted that they contributed liberally to the patriot cause in the Revolution.

While the ships bearing these many different stocks were sailing westward, England did not gain possession of the whole Atlantic seaboard without contest. The Dutch came to Manhattan in 1623 and for fifty years held sway over the imperial valley of the Hudson. It was a brief interval, as history goes, but it was long enough to stamp upon the town of Manhattan the cosmopolitan character it has ever since maintained. Into its liberal and congenial atmosphere were drawn Jews, Moravians, and Anabaptists; Scotch Presbyterians and English Nonconformists; Waldenses from Piedmont and Huguenots from France. The same spirit that made Holland the lenient host to political and religious refugees from every land in that restive age characterized her colony and laid the foundations of the great city of today. England had to wrest from the Dutch their ascendancy in New Netherland, where they split in twain the great English colonies of New England and of the South and controlled

the magnificent harbor at the mouth of the Hudson, which has since become the water gate of the nation.

While the English were thus engaged in establishing themselves on the coast, the French girt them in by a strategic circle of forts and trading posts reaching from Acadia, up the St. Lawrence, around the Great Lakes, and down the valley of the Mississippi, with outposts on the Ohio and other important confluent. When, after the final struggle between France and Britain for world empire, France retired from the North American continent, she left to England all her possessions east of the Mississippi, with the exception of a few insignificant islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the West Indies; and to Spain she ceded New Orleans and her vast claims beyond the great river.

Thus from the first, the lure of the New World beckoned to many races, and to every condition of men. By the time that England's dominion spread over half the northern continent, her colonies were no longer merely English. They were the most cosmopolitan areas in the world. A few European cities had at times been cities of refuge, but New York and Philadelphia were more than mere temporary shelters to every creed. Nowhere

else could so many tongues be heard as in a stroll down Broadway to the Battery. No European commonwealths embraced in their citizenry one-half the ethnic diversity of the Carolinas or of Pennsylvania. And within the wide range of his American domains, the English King could point to one spot or another and say: "Here the Spaniards have built a chaste and beautiful mission; here the French have founded a noble city; here my stubborn Roundheads have planted a whole nest of commonwealths; here my Dutch neighbors thought they stole a march on me, but I forestalled them; this valley is filled with Germans, and that plateau is covered with Scotch-Irish, while the Swedes have taken possession of all this region." And with a proud gesture he could add, "But everywhere they read their laws in the King's English and acknowledge my sovereignty."

Against the shifting background of history these many races of diverse origin played their individual parts, each contributing its essential characteristics to the growing complex of a new order of society in America. So on this stage, broad as the western world, we see these men of different strains subduing a wilderness and welding its diverse parts into a great nation, stretching out the

eager hand of exploration for yet more land, bringing with arduous toil the ample gifts of sea and forest to the townsfolk, hewing out homesteads in the savage wilderness, laboring faithfully at forge and shipyard and loom, bartering in the market place, putting the fear of God into their children and the fear of their own strong right arm into him whosoever sought to oppress them, be he Red Man with his tomahawk or English King with his Stamp Act.

## CHAPTER II

### THE AMERICAN STOCK

IN the history of a word we may frequently find a fragment, sometimes a large section, of universal history. This is exemplified in the term American, a name which, in the phrase of George Washington, "must always exalt the pride of patriotism" and which today is proudly borne by a hundred million people. There is no obscurity about the origin of the name America. It was suggested for the New World in 1507 by Martin Waldseemüller, a German geographer at the French college of Saint-Dié. In that year this savant printed a tract, with a map of the world or *mappemonde*, recognizing the dubious claims of discovery set up by Amerigo Vespucci and naming the new continent after him. At first applied only to South America, the name was afterwards extended to mean the northern continent as well; and in time the whole New World,



from the Frozen Ocean to the Land of Fire, came to be called America.

Inevitably the people who achieved a preponderating influence in the new continent came to be called Americans. Today the name American everywhere signifies belonging to the United States, and a citizen of that country is called an American. This unquestionably is geographically anomalous, for the neighbors of the United States, both north and south, may claim an equal share in the term. Ethnically, the only real Americans are the Indian descendants of the aboriginal races. But it is futile to combat universal usage: the World War has clinched the name upon the inhabitants of the United States. The American army, the American navy, American physicians and nurses, American food and clothing — these are phrases with a definite geographical and ethnic meaning which neither academic ingenuity nor race rivalry can erase from the memory of mankind.

This chapter, however, is to discuss the American stock, and it is necessary to look farther back than mere citizenship; for there are millions of American citizens of foreign birth or parentage who, though they are Americans, are clearly not of any American stock.



At the time of the Revolution there was a definite American population, knit together by over two centuries of toil in the hard school of frontier life, inspired by common political purposes, speaking one language, worshiping one God in divers manners, acknowledging one sovereignty, and complying with the mandates of one common law. Through their common experience in subduing the wilderness and in wresting their independence from an obstinate and stupid monarch, the English colonies became a nation. Though they did not fulfill Raleigh's hope and become an English nation, they were much more English than non-English, and these Revolutionary Americans may be called today, without abuse of the term, the original American stock. Though they were a blend of various races, a cosmopolitan admixture of ethnic strains, they were not more varied than the original admixture of blood now called English.

We may, then, properly begin our survey of the racial elements in the United States by a brief scrutiny of this American stock, the parent stem of the American people, the great trunk, whose roots have penetrated deep into the human experience of the past and whose branches have pushed upward and outward until they spread over a whole continent.

The first census of the United States was taken in 1790. More than a hundred years later, in 1909, the Census Bureau published *A Century of Population Growth* in which an attempt was made to ascertain the nationality of those who comprised the population at the taking of the first census. In that census no questions of nativity were asked. This omission is in itself significant of the homogeneity of the population at that time. The only available data, therefore, upon which such a calculation could be made were the surnames of the heads of families preserved in the schedules. A careful analysis of the list disclosed a surprisingly large number of names ostensibly English or British. Fashions in names have changed since then, and many that were so curious, simple, or fantastically compounded as to be later deemed undignified have undergone change or disappeared.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Among the names which have quite vanished were those pertaining to household matters, such as Hash, Butter, Waffle, Booze, Frill, Shirt, Lace; or describing human characteristics, as Booby, Dunce, Sallow, Daft, Lazy, Measley, Rude; or parts of the body and its ailments, as Hips, Bones, Chin, Glands, Gout, Corns, Physic; or representing property, as Shingle, Gutters, Pump, Milkhouse, Desk, Mug, Auction, Hose, Tallow. Nature also was drawn upon for a large number of names. The colors Black, Brown, and Gray survive, but Lavender, Tan, and Scarlet have gone out of vogue. Bogs, Hazelgrove, Woodyfield, Oysterbanks, Chestnut, Pinks, Ragbush, Winterberry, Peach, Walnut, Freeze,

Upon this basis the nationality of the white population was distributed among the States in accordance with Table A printed on pages 26-27. Three of the original States are not represented in this table: New Jersey, Delaware, and Georgia. The schedules of the First Census for those States were not preserved. The two new States of Kentucky and Tennessee are also missing from the list. Estimates, however, have been made for these missing States.

For Delaware, the schedules of the Second Census, 1800, survived. As there was little growth and very little change in the composition of the population during this decade, the Census Bureau used the later figures as a basis for calculating the population in 1790. Of three of the missing Southern States the report says: "The composition of the white population of Georgia, Kentucky, and of the district subsequently erected into the State of Tennessee is also unknown; but in view of the fact that Georgia was a distinctly English colony, and that Tennessee and Kentucky were settled largely

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Coldair, Bear, Tails, Chick, Bantam, Stork, Worm, Snake, and Maggot indicate the simple origin of many names. There were many strange combinations of Christian names and surnames: Peter Wentup, Christy Forgot, Unity Bachelor, Booze Still, Cutlip Hoof, and Wanton Bump left little to the imagination.

TABLE A<sup>1</sup>

DISTRIBUTION OF THE WHITE POPULATION, 1790, IN EACH STATE, ACCORDING TO NATIONALITY  
AS INDICATED BY NAMES OF FAMILIES

Note: The first column under each State gives the number of persons; the second, the percentage. The asterisk indicates less than one-tenth of one per cent.

NATIONALITY	MAINE		NEW HAMPSHIRE		VERMONT		MASSACHUSETTS	
All Nationalities	96,107	100.0	141,112	100.0	85,072	100.0	373,187	100.0
English	89,515	93.1	132,726	94.1	81,149	95.4	354,528	95.0
Scotch	4,154	4.3	6,648	4.7	2,562	3.0	13,435	3.6
Irish	1,334	1.4	1,346	1.0	597	0.7	3,732	1.0
Dutch	279	0.3	153	0.1	428	0.5	373	0.1
French	115	0.1	142	0.1	153	0.2	746	0.2
German	436	0.5			35	*	75	*
Hebrew	44	*					67	*
All others	230	0.2	97	0.1	148	0.2	231	*

<sup>1</sup> These tables and those on the pages immediately following are taken from *A Century of Population Growth*, issued by the United States Census Bureau in 1908.

NATIONALITY	RHODE ISLAND	CONNECTICUT	NEW YORK	PENNSYLVANIA
All Nationalities	64,670	232,236	314,366	423,373
English	62,079	223,437	245,901	249,656
Scotch	1,976	6,425	10,034	49,567
Irish	459	1,589	2,525	8,614
Dutch	19	258	50,600	2,623
French	88	512	2,424	2,341
German	33	4	1,103	110,357
Hebrew	9	5	385	21
All others	7	6	1,394	194

NATIONALITY	MARYLAND	VIRGINIA	NORTH CAROLINA	SOUTH CAROLINA
All Nationalities	208,649	442,117	289,181	140,178
English	175,265	375,799	240,309	115,480
Scotch	13,562	31,391	32,388	16,447
Irish	5,008	8,842	6,651	3,576
Dutch	209	884	578	219
French	1,460	2,653	868	1,882
German	12,310	21,664	8,097	2,343
Hebrew	626		1	85
All others	209	884	289	146

## OUR FOREIGNERS

TABLE B

COMPUTED DISTRIBUTION OF WHITE POPULATION, 1790, ACCORDING  
TO NATIONALITY, IN EACH STATE FOR WHICH SCHEDULES  
ARE MISSING

NATIONALITY	NEW JERSEY		DELAWARE		GEORGIA	
All Nationalities	169,954	100.0	46,310	100.0	52,886	100.0
English	98,620	58.0	39,966	86.3	43,948	83.1
Scotch	13,156	7.7	3,473	7.5	5,923	11.2
Irish	12,099	7.1	1,806	3.9	1,216	2.3
Dutch	21,581	12.7	463	1.0	106	0.2
French	3,565	2.1	232	0.5	159	0.3
German	15,678	9.2	185	0.4	1,481	2.8
All others*	5,255	3.1	185	0.4	53	0.1

NATIONALITY	KENTUCKY		TENNESSEE	
All Nationalities	61.133	100.0	31,913	100.0
English	50,802	83.1	26,519	83.1
Scotch	6,847	11.2	3,574	11.2
Irish	1,406	2.3	734	2.3
Dutch	122	0.2	64	0.2
French	183	0.3	96	0.3
German	1,712	2.8	894	2.8
All others*	61	0.1	32	0.1

\* Including Hebrews.

from Virginia and North Carolina, the application of the North Carolina proportions to the white population of these three results in what is doubtless an approximation of the actual distribution."

New Jersey presented a more complex problem. Here were Welsh and Swedes, Finns and Danes, as well as French, Dutch, Scotch, Irish, and English. A careful analysis was made of lists of freeholders, and other available sources, in the various counties. The results of these computations in the States from which no schedules of the First Census survive are given in Table B printed on page 28.

The calculations for the entire country in 1790, based upon the census schedules of the States from which reports are still available and upon estimates for the others are summed up in the following manner:

*Number and per cent distribution of the white population,  
1790:*

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Per Cent</i>
All Nationalities	3,172,444	100.0
English	2,605,699	82.1
Scotch	221,562	7.0
Irish	61,534	1.9
Dutch	78,959	2.5
French	17,619	0.6
German	176,407	5.6
All others	10,664	0.3

To this method of estimating nationality, it will at once be objected that undue prominence is given



to the derivation of the surname, an objection fully understood by those who made the estimate and one which deprives their conclusions of strict scientific verity. In a new country, where the population is in a constant flux and where members of a community composed of one race easily migrate to another part of the country and fall in with people of another race, it is very easy to modify the name to suit new circumstances. We know, for instance, that Isaac Isaacks of Pennsylvania was not a Jew, that the Van Buskirks of New Jersey were German, not Dutch, that D'Aubigné was early shortened into Dabny and Aulnay into Olney. So also many a Brown had been Braun, and several Blacks had once been only Schwartz. Even the universal Smith had absorbed more than one original Schmidt. These rather exceptional cases, however, probably do not vitiate the general conclusion here made as to the British and non-British element in the population of America, for the Dutch, the German, the French, and the Swedish cognomens are characteristically different from the British. But the differentiation between Irish, Welsh, Scotch, Scotch-Irish, and English names is infinitely more difficult. The Scotch-Irish particularly have challenged the conclusions reached by the Census Bureau. They



claim a much larger proportion of the original bulk of our population than the seven per cent included under the heading Scotch. Henry Jones Ford considers the conclusions as far as they pertain to the Scotch-Irish as "fallacious and untrustworthy." "Many Ulster names," he says,<sup>1</sup> "are also common English names. . . . Names classed as Scotch or Irish were probably mostly those of Scotch-Irish families. . . . The probability is that the English proportion should be much smaller and that the Scotch-Irish, who are not included in the Census Bureau's classification, should be much larger than the combined proportions allotted to the Scotch and the Irish."

Whatever may be the actual proportions of these British elements, as revealed by a study of the patronymics of the population at the time of American independence, the fact that the ethnic stock was overwhelmingly British stands out most prominently. We shall never know the exact ratios between the Scotch and the English, the Welsh and the Irish blended in this hardy, self-assertive, and fecund strain. But we do know that the language, the political institutions, and the common law as practiced and established in London had a

<sup>1</sup> *The Scotch-Irish in America*, pp. 219-20.

predominating influence on the destinies of the United States. While the colonists drifted far from the religious establishments of the mother country and found her commercial policies unendurable and her political hauteur galling, they nevertheless retained those legal and institutional forms which remain the foundation of Anglo-Saxon life.

For nearly half a century the American stock remained almost entirely free from foreign admixture. It is estimated that between 1790 and 1820 only 250,000 immigrants came to America, and of these the great majority came after the War of 1812. The white population of the United States in 1820 was 7,862,166. Ten years later it had risen to 10,537,378. This astounding increase was almost wholly due to the fecundity of the native stock. The equitable balance between the sexes, the ease of acquiring a home, the vigorous pioneer environment, and the informal frontier social conditions all encouraged large families. Early marriages were encouraged. Bachelors and unmarried women were rare. Girls were matrons at twenty-five and grandmothers at forty. Three generations frequently dwelt in one homestead. Families of five persons were the rule; families of eight or ten were common, while families of fourteen or fifteen did not elicit

surprise. It was the father's ambition to leave a farm to every son and, if the neighborhood was too densely settled easily to permit this, there was the West — always the West.

This was a race of nation builders. No sooner had he made the Declaration of Independence a reality than the eager pathfinder turned his face towards the setting sun and, prompted by the instincts of conquest, he plunged into the wilderness. Within a few years western New York and Pennsylvania were settled; Kentucky achieved statehood in 1792 and Tennessee four years later, soon to be followed by Mississippi in 1817 and Alabama in 1819. The great Northwest Territory yielded Ohio in 1802, Indiana in 1816, Illinois in 1818, and Michigan in 1837. Beyond the Mississippi the empire of Louisiana doubled the original area of the Republic; Louisiana came into statehood in 1812 and Missouri in 1821. Texas, Oregon, and the fruits of the Mexican War extended its confines to the Western Sea. Incredibly swift as was this march of the Stars, the American pioneer was always in advance.

The pathfinders were virtually all of American stock. The States admitted to the Union prior to 1840 were not only founded by them; they were almost wholly settled by them. When the influx of

foreigners began in the thirties, they found all the trails already blazed, the trading posts established, and the first terrors of the wilderness dispelled. They found territories already metamorphosed into States, counties organized, cities established. Schools, churches, and colleges preceded the immigrants who were settlers and not strictly pioneers. The entire territory ceded by the Treaty of 1783 was appropriated in large measure by the American before the advent of the European immigrant.

Washington, with a ring of pride, said in 1796 that the native population of America was "filling the western part of the State of New York and the country on the Ohio with their own surplusage." And James Madison in 1821 wrote that New England, "which has sent out such a continued swarm to other parts of the Union for a number of years, has continued at the same time, as the census shows, to increase in population although it is well known that it has received but comparatively few emigrants from any quarter." Beyond the Mississippi, Louisiana, with its creole population, was feeling the effect of American migration.

A strange restlessness, of the race rather than of the individual, possessed the American frontiersman. He moved from one locality to another, but

always westward, like some new migratory species that had willingly discarded the instinct for returning. He never took the back trail. A traveler, writing in 1791 from the Ohio Valley, rather superficially observed that "the Americans are lazy and bored, often moving from place to place for the sake of change; in the thirty years that the [western] Pennsylvania neighborhood has been settled, it has changed owners two or three times. The sight of money will tempt any American to sell and off he goes to a new country." Foreign observers of that time constantly allude to this universal and inexplicable restiveness. It was obviously not laziness, for pioneering was a man's task; nor boredom, for the frontier was lonely and neighbors were far apart. It was an ever-present dissatisfaction that drove this perpetual conqueror onward — a mysterious impulse, the urge of vague and unfulfilled desires. He went forward with a conquering ambition in his heart; he believed he was the forerunner of a great National Destiny. Crude rhymes of the day voice this feeling:

So shall the nation's pioneer go joyful on his way,  
To wed Penobscot water to San Francisco Bay.  
The mighty West shall bless the East, and sea  
shall answer sea,

And mountain unto mountain call, praise God,  
for we are free!

Again a popular chorus of the pathfinder rang:

Then o'er the hills in legions, boys;  
Fair freedom's star  
Points to the sunset regions, boys,  
Ha, Ha, Ha-ha!

Many a New Englander cleared a farm in western New York, Ohio, or Indiana, before settling finally in Wisconsin, Iowa, or Minnesota, whence he sent his sons on to Dakota, Montana, Oregon, and California. From Tennessee and Kentucky large numbers moved into southern Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and across the river into Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. Abraham Lincoln's father was one of these pioneers and tried his luck in various localities in Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois.

Nor had the movement ceased after a century of continental exploitation. Hamlin Garland in his notable autobiography, *A Son of the Middle Border*, brings down to our own day the evidence of this native American restiveness. His parents came of New England extraction, but settled in Wisconsin. His father, after his return from the Civil War, moved to Iowa, where he was scarcely ensconced

before an opportunity came to sell his place. The family then pushed out farther upon the Iowa prairie, where they "broke" a farm from the primeval turf. Again, in his ripe age, the father found the urge revive and under this impulse he moved again, this time to Dakota, where he remained long enough to transform a section of prairie into wheat land before he took the final stage of his western journeyings to southern California. Here he was surrounded by neighbors whose migration had been not unlike his own, and to the same sunny region another relative found his way "by way of a long trail through Iowa, Dakota, Montana, Oregon, and North California."

When the last frontier had vanished, it was seen that men of this American stock had penetrated into every valley, traversed every plain, and explored every mountain pass from Atlantic to Pacific. They organized every territory and prepared each for statehood. It was the enterprise of these sons and grandsons and great-grandsons of the Revolutionary Americans, obeying the restless impulse of a pioneer race, who spread a network of settlements and outposts over the entire land and prepared it for the immigrant invasion from Europe. Owing to this influx of foreigners, the American



stock has become mingled with other strains, especially those from Great Britain.

The Census Bureau estimated that in 1900 there were living in the United States approximately thirty-five million white people who were descended from persons enumerated in 1790. If these thirty-five million were distributed by nationality according to the proportions estimated for 1790, the result would appear as follows:

English	28,735,000
Scotch	2,450,000
Irish	665,000
Dutch	875,000
French	210,000
German	1,960,000
All others	105,000

In 1900 there were also thirty-two million descendants of white persons who had come to the United States after the First Census, yet of these over twenty million were either foreign born or the children of persons born abroad. If this ratio of increase remained the same, the American stock would apparently maintain its own, even in the midst of twentieth century immigration. But the birth rate of the foreign stock, especially among the recent comers, is much higher than of the native American stock. Conditions have so changed



that, according to the Census, the American people "have concluded that they are only about one-half as well able to rear children — at any rate, without personal sacrifice — under the conditions prevailing in 1900 as their predecessors proved themselves to be under the conditions which prevailed in 1790."

The difficulty of ascertaining ethnic influences increases immeasurably when we pass from the physical to the mental realm. There are subtle interplays of delicate forces and reactions from environment which no one can measure. Leadership nevertheless is the gift of but few races; and in the United States eminence in business, in statecraft, in letters and learning can with singular directness be traced in a preponderating proportion to this American stock.

In 1891 Henry Cabot Lodge published an essay on *The Distribution of Ability in the United States*,<sup>1</sup> based upon the 15,514 names in Appleton's *Cyclopædia of American Biography* (1887). He "treated as immigrants all persons who came to the United States after the adoption of the Constitution," and on this division he found 14,243 "Americans"

<sup>1</sup> See *The Century Magazine*, September, 1891, and Lodge's *Historical and Political Essays*, 1892.

and 1271 "immigrants," distributed racially as follows:

AMERICANS		IMMIGRANTS	
English	10,376	English	345
Scotch-Irish	1439	German	245
German	659	Irish	200
Huguenot	589	Scotch	151
Scotch	436	Scotch-Irish	88
Dutch	336	French	63
Welsh	159	Canadian and	
Irish	109	British Colonial	60
French	85	Scandinavian	18
Scandinavian	31	Welsh	16
Spanish	7	Belgian	15
Italian	7	Swiss	15
Swiss	5	Dutch	14
Greek	3	Polish	13
Russian	1	Hungarian	11
Polish	1	Italian	10
		Greek	3
		Russian	2
		Spanish	1
		Portuguese	1

Of the total number of individuals selected, a large number were chosen by the editors as being of enough importance to entitle them to a small portrait in the text, and fifty-eight persons who had achieved some unusual distinction were accorded

a full-page portrait. These, however, represented achievement rather than ability, for they included the Presidents of the United States and other political personages. Of the total number selected for the distinction of a small portrait, 1200 were "Americans" and 71 "immigrants." Of the 1200 "Americans," 856 were of English extraction, 129 Scotch-Irish, 57 Huguenot, 45 Scotch, 39 Dutch, 37 German, 15 Welsh, 13 Irish, 6 French, and one each of Scandinavian, Spanish, and Swiss. Of the "immigrants" 15 were English, 14 German, 11 Irish, 8 Scotch-Irish, 7 Scotch, 6 Swiss, 4 French, 3 from Spanish Provinces, and 1 each from Scandinavia, Belgium, and Poland. All the 58 whose full-page portraits are presumed to be an index to unusual prominence were found to be "Americans" and by race extraction they were distributed as follows: English 41, Scotch-Irish 8, Scotch 4, Welsh 2, Dutch, Spanish, and Irish 1 each.

Whatever may be said in objection to this index of ability (and Senator Lodge effectively answered his critics in a note appended to this study in his volume of *Historical and Political Essays*), it is apparent that a large preponderance of leadership in American politics, business, art, literature, and learning has been derived from the American stock.

This is a perfectly natural result. The founders of the Republic themselves were in large degree the children of the pick of Europe. The Puritan, Cavalier, Quaker, Scotch-Irish, Huguenot, and Dutch pioneers were not ordinary folk in any sense of the term. They were, in a measure, a race of heroes. Their sons and grandsons inherited their vigor and their striving. It is not at all singular that every President of the United States and every Chief Justice of the Federal Supreme Court has come from this stock, nor that the vast majority of Cabinet members, of distinguished Senators, of Speakers of the House, and of men of note in the House of Representatives trace back to it their lineage in whole or in part. After the middle of the nineteenth century the immigrant vote began to make itself felt, and politicians contended for the "Irish vote" and the "German vote" and later for the "Italian vote," the "Jewish vote," and the "Norwegian vote." Members of the immigrant races began to appear in Washington, and the new infusion of blood made itself felt in the political life of the country.

But, if material were available for a comprehensive analysis of American leadership in life and thought today, a larger number of names of

non-native origin would no doubt appear than was disclosed in 1891 by Senator Lodge's analysis. All the learned professions, for instance, and many lines of business are finding their numbers swelled by persons of foreign parentage. This change is to be expected. The influence of environment, especially of free education and unfettered opportunity, is calling forth the talents of the children of the immigrants. The number of descendants from the American stock yearly becomes relatively less; intermarriage with the children of the foreign born is increasingly frequent. Profound changes have taken place since the American pioneers pushed their way across the Alleghanies; changes infinitely more profound have taken place even since the dawn of the twentieth century and have put to the test of Destiny the institutions which are called "American."

Nevertheless in a large sense every great tradition of the original American stock lives today: the tradition of free movement, of initiative and enterprise; the tradition of individual responsibility; the primary traditions of democracy and liberty. These give a virile present meaning to the name American. A noted French journalist received this impression of a group of soldiers who in 1918 were bivouacked

in his country: "I saw yesterday an American unit in which men of very varied origin abounded — French, Polish, Czech, German, English, Canadian — such their names and other facts revealed them. Nevertheless, all were of the same or similar type, a fact due apparently to the combined influences of sun, air, primary education, and environment. And one was not long in discovering that the intelligence of each and all had manifestly a wider outlook than that of the man of single racial lineage and of one country." And these men were Americans.

## CHAPTER III

### THE NEGRO

NOT many years ago a traveler was lured into a London music hall by the sign: *Spirited American Singing and Dancing*. He saw on the stage a sextette of black-faced comedians, singing darky rag-time to the accompaniment of banjo and bones, dancing the clog and the cakewalk, and reciting negro stories with the familiar accent and smile, all to the evident delight of the audience. The man in the seat next to him remarked, "These Americans are really lively." Not only in England, but on the continent, the negro's melodies, his dialect, and his banjo, have always been identified with America. Even Americans do not at once think of the negro as a foreigner, so accustomed have they become to his presence, to his quaint mythology, his soft accent, and his genial and accommodating nature. He was to be found in every colony before the Revolution; he was an integral part of American

economic life long before the great Irish and German immigrations, and, while in the mass he is confined to the South, he is found today in every State in the Union.

The negro, however, is racially the most distinctly foreign element in America. He belongs to a period of biological and racial evolution far removed from that of the white man. His habitat is the continent of the elephant and the lion, the mango and the palm, while that of the race into whose state he has been thrust is the continent of the horse and the cow, of wheat and the oak.

There is a touch of the dramatic in every phase of the negro's contact with America: his unwilling coming, his forcible detention, his final submission, his emancipation, his struggle to adapt himself to freedom, his futile competition with a superior economic order. Every step from the kidnaping, through "the voiceless woe of servitude" and the attempted redemption of his race, has been accompanied by tragedy. How else could it be when peoples of two such diverse epochs in racial evolution meet?

His coming was almost contemporaneous with that of the white man. "American slavery," says Channing,<sup>1</sup> "began with Columbus, possibly

<sup>1</sup> *History of the United States*, vol. I, p. 116.



because he was the first European who had a chance to introduce it: and negroes were brought to the New World at the suggestion of the saintly Las Casas to alleviate the lot of the unhappy and fast disappearing red man." They were first employed as body servants and were used extensively in the West Indies before their common use in the colonies on the continent. In the first plantations of Virginia a few of them were found as laborers. In 1619 what was probably the first slave ship on that coast — it was euphemistically called a "Dutch man-of-war" — landed its human cargo in Virginia. From this time onward the numbers of African slaves steadily increased. Bancroft estimated their number at 59,000 in 1714, 78,000 in 1727, and 263,000 in 1754. The census of 1790 recorded 697,624 slaves in the United States. This almost incredible increase was not due alone to the fecundity of the negro. It was due, in large measure, to the unceasing slave trade.

It is difficult to imagine more severe ordeals than the negroes endured in the day of the slave trade. Their captors in the jungles of Africa — usually neighboring tribesmen in whom the instinct for capture, enslavement, and destruction was untamed — soon learned that the aged, the inferior, the

defective, were not wanted by the trader. These were usually slaughtered. Then followed for the less fortunate the long and agonizing march to the seaboard. Every one not robust enough to endure the arduous journey was allowed to perish by the way. On the coast, the agent of the trader or the middleman awaited the captive. He was an expert at detecting those evidences of weakness and disease which had eluded the eye of the captor or the rigor of the march. "An African factor of fair repute," said a slave captain,<sup>1</sup> "is ever careful to select his human cargo with consummate prudence, so as not only to supply his employers with athletic laborers, but to avoid any taint of disease." But the severest test of all was the hideous "middle passage" which remained to every imported slave a nightmare to the day of his death. The unhappy captives were crowded into dark, unventilated holds and were fed scantily on food which was strange to their lips; they were unable to understand the tongue of their masters and often unable to understand the dialects of their companions in misfortune; they were depressed with their helplessness on the limitless sea, and their childish superstitions were fed by a

<sup>1</sup> *Captain Canot: or Twenty Years in a Slaver*, by Brantz Mayer, p. 94 ff.

thousand new terrors and emotions. It was small wonder that, when disease began its ravages in the shipload of these kidnaped beings, "the mortality of thirty per cent was not rare." That this was primarily a physical selection which made no allowance for mental aptitudes did not greatly diminish in the eyes of the master the slave's utility. The new continent needed muscle power; and so tens of thousands of able-bodied Africans were landed on American soil, alien to everything they found there.

These slaves were kidnaped from many tribes. "In our negro population," says Tillinghast, "as it came from the Western Coast of Africa, there were Wolofs and Fulans, tall, well-built, and very black, hailing from Senegambia and its vicinity; there were hundreds of thousands from the Slave Coast — Tshis, Ewes, and Yorubans, including Dahomians; and mingled with all these Soudanese negroes proper were occasional contributions of mixed stock, from the north and northeast, having an infusion of Moorish blood. There were other thousands from Lower Guinea, belonging to Bantu stock, not so black in color as the Soudanese, and thought by some to be slightly superior to them."<sup>1</sup> No historian has recorded these tribal differences.

<sup>1</sup> *The Negro in Africa and America*, p. 113.

The new environment, so strange, so ruthless, swallowed them; and, in the welter of their toil, the black men became so intermingled that all tribal distinctions soon vanished. Here and there, however, a careful observer may still find among them a man of superior mien or a woman of haughty demeanor denoting perhaps an ancestral prince or princess who once exercised authority over some African jungle village.

Slavery was soon a recognized institution in every American colony. By 1665 every colony had its slave code. In Virginia the laws became increasingly strict until the dominion of the master over his slaves was virtually absolute. In South Carolina an insurrection of slaves in 1739, which cost the lives of twenty-one whites and forty-four blacks, led to very drastic laws. Of the Northern colonies, New York seems to have been most in fear of a black peril. In 1700 there were about six thousand slaves in this colony, chiefly in the city, where there were also many free negroes, and on the large estates along the Hudson. Twice the white people of the city for reasons that have not been preserved, believing that slave insurrections were imminent, resorted to extreme and brutal measures. In 1712 they burned to death two negroes, hanged in chains

a third, and condemned a fourth to be broken on the wheel. In 1741 they went so far as to burn fourteen negroes, hang eighteen, and transport seventy-one.

In New England where their numbers were relatively small and the laws were less severe, the negroes were employed chiefly in domestic service. In Quaker Pennsylvania there were many slaves, the proprietor himself being a slave owner. Ten years after the founding of Philadelphia, the authorities ordered the constables to arrest all negroes found "gadding about" on Sunday without proper permission. They were to remain in jail until Monday, receiving in lieu of meat or drink thirty-nine lashes on the bare back.

Protests against slavery were not uncommon during the colonial period; and before the Revolution was accomplished several of the States had emancipated their slaves. Vermont led the way in 1777; the Ordinance of 1787 forbade slavery in the Northwest Territory; and by 1804 all the Northern States had provided that their blacks should be set free. The opinion prevailed that slavery was on the road to gradual extinction. In the Federal Convention of 1787 this belief was crystallized into the clause making possible the prohibition of the slave trade after the year 1808. Mutual benefit

organizations among the negroes, both slave and free, appeared in many States, North and South. Negro congregations were organized. The number of free negroes increased rapidly, and in the Northern States they acquired such civil rights as industry, thrift, and integrity commanded. Here and there colored persons of unusual gifts distinguished themselves in various callings and were even occasionally entertained in white households.

The industrial revolution in England, with its spinning jenny and power loom, indirectly influenced the position of the negro in America. The new machinery had an insatiable maw for cotton. It could turn such enormous quantities of raw fiber into cloth that the old rate of producing cotton was entirely inadequate. New areas had to be placed under cultivation. The South, where soil and climate combined to make an ideal cotton land, came into its own. And when Eli Whitney's gin was perfected, cotton was crowned king. Statistics tell the story: the South produced about 8000 bales of cotton in 1790; 650,000 bales in 1820; 2,469,093 bales in 1850; 5,387,052 bales in 1860.<sup>1</sup> This vast

<sup>1</sup> Coman, *Industrial History of the United States*, p. 238. Bogart gives the figures as 1,976,000 bales in 1840, and 4,675,000 bales in 1860. *Economic History of the United States*, p. 256.

increase in production called for human muscle which apparently only the negro could supply.

Once it was shown that slavery paid, its status became fixed as adamant. The South forthwith ceased weakly to apologize for it, as it had formerly done, and began to defend it, at first with some hesitation, then with boldness, and finally with vehement aggressiveness. It was economically necessary; it was morally right; it was the peculiar Southern domestic institution; and, above all, it paid. On every basis of its defense, the cotton kingdom would brook no interference from any other section of the country. So there was formed a race feudality in the Republic, rooted in profits, protected by the political power of the slave lords, and enveloped in a spirit of defiance and bitterness which reacted without mercy upon its victims. Tighter and tighter were drawn the coils of restrictions around the enslaved race. The mind and the soul as well as the body were placed under domination. They might marry to breed but not to make homes. Such charity and kindness as they experienced, they received entirely from individual humane masters; society treated them merely as chattels.

Attempted insurrections, such as that in South Carolina in 1822 and that in Virginia in 1831 in



which many whites and blacks were killed, only produced harsher laws and more cruel punishments, until finally the slave became convinced that his only salvation lay in running away. The North Star was his beacon light of freedom. A few thousand made their way southward through the chain of swamps that skirt the Atlantic coast and mingled with the Indians in Florida. Tens of thousands made their way northward along well recognized routes to the free States and to Canada: the Appalachian ranges with their far-spreading spurs furnished the friendliest of these highways; the Mississippi Valley with its marshlands, forests, and swamps provided less secure hiding places; and the Cumberland Mountains, well supplied with limestone caves, offered a third pathway. At the northern end of these routes the "Underground Railway"<sup>1</sup> received the fugitives. From the Cumberland, leading through the heart of Tennessee and Kentucky, this benevolent transfer stretched through Ohio and Indiana to Canada; from southern Illinois it led northward through Wisconsin; and from the Appalachian route mysterious byways led through New York and New England.

<sup>1</sup> See *The Anti-Slavery Crusade*, by Jesse Macy (in *The Chronicles of America*), Chapter VIII.



How many thus escaped cannot be reckoned, but it is known that the number of free negroes in the North increased so rapidly that laws discriminating against them were passed in many States. Nowhere did the negro enjoy all the rights that the white man had. In some States the free negroes were so restricted in settling as to be virtually prohibited; in others they were disfranchised; in others they were denied the right of jury duty or of testifying in court. But in spite of this discrimination on the part of the law, a great sympathy for the runaway slave spread among the people, and the fugitive carried into the heart of the North the venom of the institution of which he was the unhappy victim.

Meanwhile the slave trade responded promptly to the lure of gain which the increased demand for cotton held out. The law of 1807 prohibiting the importation of slaves had, from the date of its enactment, been virtually a dead letter. Messages of Presidents, complaints of government attorneys, of collectors and agents called attention to the continuous violation of the law; and its nullity was a matter of common knowledge. When the market price of a slave rose to \$325 in 1840 and to \$500 after 1850, the increase in profits made slave piracy a rather respectable business carried on by American

citizens in American built ships flying the American flag and paying high returns on New York and New England capital. Owing to this steady importation there was a constant intermingling of raw stock from the jungles with the negroes who had been slaves in America for several generations.

In 1860 there were 4,441,830 negroes in the United States, of whom only 488,070 were free. About thirteen per cent of the total number were mulattoes. Among the four million slaves were men and women of every gradation of experience with civilization, from those who had just disembarked from slave ships to those whose ancestry could be traced to the earliest days of the colonies. It was not, therefore, a strictly homogeneous people upon whom were suddenly and dramatically laid the burdens and responsibilities of the freedman. Among the emancipated blacks were not a few in whom there still throbbed vigorously the savage life they had but recently left behind and who could not yet speak intelligible English. Though there were many who were skilled in household arts and in the useful customary handicrafts, large numbers were acquainted only with the simplest toil of the open fields. There were a few free blacks who possessed property, in some instances to the value of many

thousands of dollars, but the great bulk were wholly inexperienced in the responsibilities of ownership. There were some who had mastered the rudiments of learning and here and there was to be found a gifted mind, but ninety per cent of the negroes were unacquainted with letters and were strangers to even the most rudimentary learning. Their religion was a picturesque blend of Christian precepts and Voodoo customs.

The Freedmen's Bureau, authorized by Congress early in 1865, had as its functions to aid the negro to develop self-control and self-reliance, to help the freedman with his new wage contracts, to befriend him when he appeared in court, and to provide for him schools and hospitals. It was a simple, slender reed for the race to lean upon until it learned to walk. But it interfered with the orthodox opinion of that day regarding individual independence and was limited to the period of war and one year thereafter. It was eyed with suspicion and was regarded with criticism by both the keepers of the *laissez faire* faith and the former slave owners. It established a number of schools and made a modest beginning in peasant proprietorship and free labor.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *The Sequel of Appomattox*, by Walter L. Fleming (in *The Chronicles of America*), Chapter IV.

When this temporary guide was withdrawn, private organizations to some extent took its place. The American Missionary Association continued the educational work, and volunteers shouldered other benevolences. But no power and no organization could take the place of the national authority. If the Freedmen's Bureau could have been stripped of those evil-intentioned persons who used it for private gain, been so organized as to enlist the support of the Southern white population, and been continued until a new generation of blacks were prepared for civil life, the colossal blunders and criminal misfits of that bitter period of transition might have been avoided. But political opportunism spurned comprehensive plans, and the negro suddenly found himself forced into social, political, and economic competition with the white man.

The social and political struggle that followed was short-lived. There were a few desperate years under the domination of the carpetbagger and the Ku Klux Klan, a period of physical coercion and intimidation. Within a decade the negro vote was uncast or uncounted, and the grandfather clauses soon completed the political mastery of the former slave owner. A strict interpretation of the

Civil Rights Act denied the application of the equality clause of the Constitution to social equality, and the social as well as the political separation of the two stocks was also accomplished. "Jim Crow," cars, separate accommodations in depots and theaters, separate schools, separate churches, attempted segregations in cities—these are all symbolic of two separate races forcibly united by constitutional amendments.

But the economic struggle continued, for the black man, even if politically emasculated and socially isolated, had somehow to earn a living. In their first reaction of anger and chagrin, some of the whites here and there made attempts to reduce freedmen to their former servitude, but their efforts were effectually checked by the Fifteenth Amendment. An ingenious peonage, however, was created by means of the criminal law. Strict statutes were passed by States on guardianship, vagrancy, and petty crimes. It was not difficult to bring charges under these statutes, and the heavy penalties attached, together with the wide discretion permitted to judge and jury, made it easy to subject the culprit to virtual serfdom for a term of years. He would be leased to some contractor, who would pay for his keep and would profit by his

toil. Whatever justification there may have been for these statutes, the convict lease system soon fell into disrepute, and it has been generally abandoned.

It was upon the land that the freedman naturally sought his economic salvation. He was experienced in cotton growing. But he had neither acres nor capital. These he had to find and turn to his own uses ere he could really be economically free. So he began as a farm laborer, passed through various stages of tenantry, and finally graduated into land ownership. One finds today examples of every stage of this evolution.<sup>1</sup> There is first the farm laborer, receiving at the end of the year a fixed wage. He is often supplied with house and garden and usually with food and clothing. There are many variations of this labor contract. The "cropper" is barely a step advanced above the laborer, for he, too, furnishes nothing but labor, while the landlord supplies house, tools, live stock, and seed. His wage, however, is paid not in cash but in a stipulated share of the crop. From this share he must pay for the supplies received and interest thereon. This method, however, has proved to be a mutually unsatisfactory arrangement

<sup>1</sup> See *The New South* by Holland Thompson (in *The Chronicles of America*), Chapters iv and vii.



and is usually limited to hard pressed owners of poor land.

The larger number of the negro farmers are tenants on shares or metayers. They work the land on their own responsibility, and this degree of independence appeals to them. They pay a stipulated portion of the crop as rent. If they possess some capital and the rental is fair, this arrangement proves satisfactory. But as very few negro metayers possess the needed capital, they resort to a system of crop-lienage under which a local retail merchant advances the necessary supplies and obtains a mortgage on the prospective crop. Many negro farmers, however, have achieved the independence of cash renters, assuming complete control of their crops and the disposition of their time. And finally, 241,000 negro farmers are landowners.<sup>1</sup> By 1910 nearly 900,000 negroes had achieved some degree of rural economic stability.

The negro has not been so fortunate in his attempts to make a place for himself in the industrial world. The drift to the cities began soon after emancipation. During the first decade, the dissatisfaction with the landlordism which then prevailed, seconded by the demand for unskilled labor

<sup>1</sup> *Negroes in the United States*, Census Bulletin No. 129, p. 37.

in the rapidly growing cities, drew the negroes from the land in such considerable numbers that the landowners were induced to make more liberal terms to keep the laborers on their farms. While there has been a large increase in the number of negroes engaged in agriculture, there has at the same time been a very marked current from the smaller communities to the new industrial cities of the South and to some of the manufacturing centers of the North. In recent years there have been wholesale importations of negro laborers into many Northern cities and towns, sometimes as strike breakers but more frequently to supply the urgent demand for unskilled labor. Many of the smaller manufacturing towns of New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Indiana are accumulating a negro population.

Very few of these industrial negroes, however, are skilled workers. They toil rather as ordinary day laborers, porters, stevedores, teamsters, and domestics. There has been a great deal written of the decline of the negro artisan. Walter F. Willcox, the eminent statistician, after a careful study of the facts concludes that economically "the negro as a race is losing ground, is being confined more and more to the inferior and less remunerative



occupations, and is not sharing proportionately to his numbers in the prosperity of the country as a whole or of the section in which he mainly lives."

It appears, therefore, that the pathway of emancipation has not led the negro out of the ranks of humble toil and into racial equality. In order to equip him more effectively for a place in the world, industrial schools have been established, among which the most noted is the Tuskegee Institute. Its founder, Booker T. Washington, advised his fellow negroes to yield quietly to the political and social distinctions raised against them and to perfect themselves in handicrafts and the mechanic arts, in the faith that civil rights would ultimately follow economic power and recognized industrial capacity. His teaching received the almost unanimous approval of both North and South. But opinion among his own people was divided, and in 1905 the "Niagara Movement" was launched, followed five years later by the organizing of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. This organization advised a more aggressive attitude towards race distinctions, outspokenly advocated race equality, demanded the negro's rights, and maintained a restless propaganda. These champions of the race possibilities of the negro

point to the material advance made since slavery; to the 500,000 houses and the 221,000 farms owned by them; their 22,000 small retail businesses and their 40 banks; to the 40,000 churches with nearly 4,000,000 members; to the 200 colleges and secondary schools maintained for negroes and largely supported by them; to their 100 old people's homes, 30 hospitals, 300 periodicals; to the 6000 physicians, dentists, and nurses; the 30,000 teachers, the 18,000 clergymen. They point to the beacon lights of their genius: Frederick Douglass, statesman; J. C. Price, orator; Booker T. Washington, educator; W. E. B. DuBois, scholar; Paul Laurence Dunbar, poet; Charles W. Chestnutt, novelist. And they compare this record of 50 years' achievement with the preceding 245 years of slavery.

This, however, is only one side of the shield. There is another side, nowhere better illustrated, perhaps, than in the neglected negro gardens of the South. Near every negro hut is a garden patch large enough to supply the family with vegetables for the entire year, but it usually is neglected. "If they have any garden at all," says a negro critic from Tuskegee, "it is apt to be choked with weeds and other noxious growths. With every advantage of soil and climate and with a steady market if

they live near any city or large town, few of the colored farmers get any benefit from this, one of the most profitable of all industries." In marked contrast to these wild and unkempt patches are the gardens of the Italians who have recently invaded portions of the South and whose garden patches are almost miraculously productive. And this invasion brings a real threat to the future of the negro. His happy-go-lucky ways, his easy philosophy of life, the remarkable ease with which he severs home ties and shifts from place to place, his indifference to property obligations — these negative defects in his character may easily lead to his economic doom if the vigorous peasantry of Italy and other lands are brought into competition with him.

## CHAPTER IV

### UTOPIAS IN AMERICA

AMERICA has long been a gigantic Utopia. To every immigrant since the founding of Jamestown this coast has gleamed upon the horizon as a Promised Land. America, too, has provided convenient plots of ground, as laboratories for all sorts of vagaries, where, unhampered by restrictions and unannoyed by inquisitive neighbors, enthusiastic dreamers could attempt to reconstruct society. Whenever an eccentric in Europe conceived a social panacea no matter how absurd, he said, "Let's go to America and try it out." There were so many of these enterprises that their exact number is unknown. Many of them perished in so brief a time that no friendly chronicler has even saved their names from oblivion. But others lived, some for a year, some for a decade, and few for more than a generation. They are of interest today not only because they brought a considerable number of

foreigners to America, but also because in their history may be observed many of the principles of communism, or socialism, at work under favorable conditions. While the theory of Marxian socialism differs in certain details from these communistic experiments, the foreign-made nostrums so brazenly proclaimed today wherever malcontents are gathered together is in essence nothing new in America. Communism was tried and found wanting by the Pilgrim Fathers; since then it has been tried and found wanting over and over again. Some of the communistic colonies, it will appear, waxed fat out of the resources of their lands; but, in the end, even those which were most fortunate and successful withered away, and their remnants were absorbed by the great competitive life that surrounded them.

There were two general types of these communities, the sectarian and the economic. Frequently they combined a peculiar religious belief with the economic practice of having everything in common. The sectarians professed to be neither proselyters nor propagandists but religious devotees, accepting communism as a physical advantage as well as a spiritual balm, and seeking in seclusion and quiet merely to save their own souls.

The majority of the religious communists came from Germany — the home, also, of Marxian socialism in later years — where persecution was the lot of innumerable little sects which budded after the Reformation. They came usually as whole colonies, bringing both leaders and membership with them.<sup>1</sup> Probably the earliest to arrive in America were the Labadists, who denied the doctrine of original sin, discarded the Sabbath, and held strict views of marriage. In 1684, under the leadership of Peter Sluyter or Schluter (an assumed name, his original name being Vorstmann), some of these Labadists settled on the Bohemia River in Delaware. They were sent out from the mother colony in West Friesland to select a site for the entire body, but it does not appear that any others migrated, for within fifteen years the American

<sup>1</sup> As is usual among people who pride themselves on their peculiarities there were variations of opinion among these sects which led to schisms. The Mennonites contained at one time no less than eleven distinct branches, among them the Amish, Old and New, whose ridiculous singularity of dress, in which they discarded all ornaments and even buttons, earned them the nickname "Hooks and Eyes." But no matter how aloof these sects held themselves from the world, or what asceticism they practiced upon themselves, or what spiritual and economic fraternity they displayed to each other, they possessed a remarkable native cunning in bargaining over a bushel of wheat or a shoat, and for a time most of their communities prospered.

colony was reduced to eight men. Sluyter evidently had considerable business capacity, for he became a wealthy tobacco planter and slave trader.

In 1693 Johann Jacob Zimmermann, a distinguished mathematician and astronomer and the founder of an order of mystics called Pietists, started for America, to await the coming of the millennium, which his calculations placed in the autumn of 1694. But the fate of common mortals overtook the unfortunate leader and he died just as he was ready to sail from Rotterdam. About forty members of his brotherhood settled in the forests on the heights near Germantown, Pennsylvania, and, under the guidance of Johann Kelpius, achieved a unique influence over the German peasantry in that vicinity. The members of the brotherhood made themselves useful as teachers and in various handicrafts. They were especially in demand among the superstitious for their skill in casting horoscopes, using divining rods, and carving potent amulets. Their mysterious astronomical tower on the heights of the Wissahickon was the Mecca of the curious and the distressed. To the gentle Kelpius was ascribed the power of healing, but he was himself the victim of consumption. The brotherhood did not long survive his death in 1708



or 1709. Their astrological instruments may now be seen in the collections of the Pennsylvania Philosophical Society.

The first group of Dunkards (a name derived from their method of baptism, *eintunken*, to immerse) settled in Pennsylvania in 1719. A few years later they were joined by Conrad Beissel (Beizel or Peysel). This man had come to America to unite with the Pietist group in Germantown, but, as Kelpius was dead and his followers dispersed he joined the Dunkards. His desires for a monastic life drove him into solitary meditation — tradition says he took shelter in a cave — where he came to the conviction that the seventh day of the week should be observed as the day of rest. This conclusion led to friction with the Dunkards; and as a result, with three men and two women, Beissel founded in 1728 on the Cocalico River, the cloister of Ephrata. From this arose the first communistic Eden successfully established in America and one of the few to survive to the present century. Though in 1900 the community numbered only seventeen members, in its prime while Beissel was yet alive it sheltered three hundred, owned a prosperous paper mill, a grist mill, an oil mill, a fulling mill, a printing press, a schoolhouse, dwellings for



the married members, and large dormitories for the celibates. The meeting-house was built entirely without metal, following literally the precedent of Solomon, who built his temple "so that there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building." Wooden pegs took the place of nails, and the laths were fastened laboriously into grooves. Averse to riches, Beissel's people refused gifts from William Penn, King George III, and other prominent personages. The pious Beissel was a very capable leader, with a passion for music and an ardor for simplicity. He instituted among the unmarried members of the community a celibate order embracing both sexes, and he reduced the communal life of both the religious and secular members to a routine of piety and labor. The society was known, even in England, for the excellence of its paper, for the good workmanship of its printing press, and especially for the quality of its music, which was composed largely by Beissel. His chorals were among the first composed and sung in America. His school, too, was of such quality that it drew pupils from Baltimore and Philadelphia. After his death in 1786, in his seventy-second year, his successor tried for twenty-eight years to maintain the discipline and

distinction of the order. It was eventually deemed prudent to incorporate the society under the laws of the State and to entrust its management to a board of trustees, and the cloistered life of the community became a memory.

A community patterned after Ephrata was founded in 1800 by Peter Lehman at Snow Hill, in Franklin County, Pennsylvania. It consisted of some forty German men and women living in cloisters but relieving the monotony of their toil and the rigor of their piety with music. As in Ephrata, there was a twofold membership, the consecrated and the secular. The entire community, however, vanished after the death of its founder.

When Beissel's Ephrata was in its heyday, the Moravians, under the patronage of Count Zinzendorf of Saxony, established in 1741 a community on the Lehigh River in Pennsylvania, named Bethlehem in token of their humility. The colony provided living and working quarters for both the married and unmarried members. After about twenty years of experimenting, the communistic regimen was abandoned. Bethlehem, however, continued to thrive, and its schools and its music became widely known.

The story of the Harmonists, one of the most suc-

cessful of all the communistic colonies is even more interesting. The founder, Johann Georg Rapp, had been a weaver and vine gardener in the little village of Iptingen in Württemberg. He drew upon himself and his followers the displeasure of the Church by teaching that religion was a personal matter between the individual and his God; that the Bible, not the pronouncements of the clergy, should be the guide to the true faith, and that the ordinances of the Church were not necessarily the ordinances of God. The petty persecutions which these doctrines brought upon him and his fellow separatists turned them towards liberal America. In 1803 Rapp and some of his companions crossed the sea and selected as a site for their colony five thousand acres of land in Butler County, Pennsylvania. There they built the new town of Harmony, to which came about six hundred persons, all told. On February 15, 1805 they organized the Harmony Society and signed a solemn agreement to merge all their possessions in one common lot.<sup>1</sup> Among

<sup>1</sup> Under the communal contract, which was later upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States, members agreed to merge their properties and to renounce all claims for services; and the community, on its part, agreed to support the members and to repay without interest, to any one desiring to withdraw, the amount he had put into the common fund.

them were a few persons of education and property, but most of them were sturdy, thrifty mechanics and peasants, who, under the skillful direction of Father Rapp, soon transformed the forest into a thriving community. After a soul stirring revival in 1807, they adopted celibacy. Those who were married did not separate but lived together in solemn self-restraint, "treating each other as brother and sister in Christ."<sup>1</sup> Their belief that the second coming of the Lord was imminent no doubt strengthened their resolution. At this time, also, the men all agreed to forego the use of tobacco — no small sacrifice on the part of hard-working laborers.

The region, however, was unfavorable to the growth of the grape, which was the favorite Württemberg crop. In 1814 the society accordingly sold the communal property for \$100,000 and removed to a site on the Wabash River, in Indiana, where, under the magic of their industry, the beautiful village of New Harmony arose in one year, and where many of their sturdy buildings still remain a testimony to their honest craftsmanship. Unfortunately, however, two pests appeared which they had not foreseen. Harassed by malaria and

<sup>1</sup> *Communitistic Societies of the United States*, by Charles Nordhoff, p. 73.

meddlesome neighbors, Father Rapp a third time sought a new Canaan. In 1825 he sold the entire site to Robert Owen, the British philanthropic socialist, and the Harmonists moved back to Pennsylvania. They built their third and last home on the Ohio, about twenty miles from Pittsburgh, and called it Economy in prophetic token of the wealth which their industry and shrewdness would soon bring in.

The chaste and simple beauty of this village was due to the skill and good taste of Friedrich Reichert Rapp, an architect and stone cutter, the adopted son of Father Rapp. The fine proportions of the plain buildings, with their vines festooned between the upper and lower windows, the quaint and charming gardens, the tantalizing labyrinth where visitors lost themselves in an attempt to reach the Summer House — these were all of his creation. Friedrich Rapp was also a poet, an artist, and a musician. He gathered a worthy collection of paintings and a museum of Indian relics and objects of natural history. He composed many of the fine hymns which impress every visitor to Economy. He was likewise an energetic and skillful business man and represented the colony in its external affairs until his death in 1834. He was

elected a member of the convention that framed the first constitution of Indiana, and later he was made a member of the legislature. Father Rapp, who possessed rare talents as an organizer, controlled the internal affairs of the colony. Those who left the community because unwilling to abide its discipline often pronounced their leader a narrow autocrat. But there can be no doubt that eminent good sense and gentleness tempered his judgments. He personally led the community in industry, in prayers, and in faith, until 1847, when death removed him. A council of nine elders elected by the members was then charged with the spiritual guidance of the community, and two trustees were appointed to administer its business affairs.

Economy was a German community where German was spoken and German customs were maintained, although every one also spoke English. As there were but few accessions to the community and from time to time there were defections and withdrawals, the membership steadily declined<sup>1</sup>;

<sup>1</sup> The largest membership was attained in 1827, when 522 were enrolled. There were 391 in 1836; 321 in 1846; 170 in 1864; 146 in 1866; 70 in 1879; 34 in 1888; 37 in 1892; 10 in 1897; 8 in 1902, only two of whom were men; and in 1903, three women and one man. The population of Economy, however, was always much larger than the communal membership.



but while the community was dwindling in membership it was rapidly increasing in wealth. Oil and coal were found on some of its lands; the products of its mills and looms, of its wine presses and distilleries, were widely and favorably known; and its outside investments, chiefly in manuiactories and railroads, yielded even greater returns. These outside interests, indeed, became in time the sole support of the community for, as the membership fell away, the local industries had to be shut down. Then it was that communistic methods of doing business became inadequate and the colony ran into difficulties. An expert accountant in 1892 disclosed the debts of the community to be about one and a half million dollars. But the outside industrial enterprises in which the community had invested were sound; and the vast debt was paid. The society remained solvent, with a huge surplus, though out of prosperity not of its own making. When the lands at Economy were eventually sold, about eight acres were reserved to the few survivors of the society, including the Great House of Father Rapp and its attractive garden, with the use of the church and dwellings, so that they might spend their last days in the peaceful surroundings that had brought them prosperity and happiness.

Lead me, Father, out of harm  
To the quiet Zoar farm  
If it be Thy will.

So sang another group of simple German separatists, of whom some three hundred came to America from Württemberg in 1817, under the leadership of Joseph Bimeler (Bäumeler) and built the village of Zoar in Tuscarawas County, Ohio. They acquired five thousand acres of land and signed articles of association in April, 1819, turning all their individual property and all their future earnings into a common fund to be managed by an elected board of directors. The community provided its members with their daily necessities and two suits of clothes a year. The members were assigned to various trades which absorbed all their time and left them very little strength for amusement or reading. Their one recreation was singing. The society was bound to celibacy until the marriage of Bimeler to his housekeeper; thereafter marriage was permitted but not encouraged.

In 1832 the society was incorporated under the laws of Ohio, and until its dissolution it was managed as a corporation. A few Germans joined the society. No American ever requested admission. Joseph Bimeler was elected Agent General and



thereby became the chosen as well as the natural leader of the community. Like other patriarchs of that epoch who led their following into the wilderness, he was a man of some education and many gifts. He was the spiritual mentor; but his piety, which was sincere and simple, did not rob him of the shrewdness necessary to material success. His followers were loyally devoted to him. They built for him the largest house in the community, a fine colonial manor house, where he dwelt in comparative luxury and reigned as their "King." When he died in 1853 he had seen the prosperity of his colony reach its zenith. It remained small. Scarcely more than three hundred members ever dwelt in the village which, in spite of its profusion of vines and flowers, lacked the informal quaintness and originality of Rapp's Economy. The Tuscarawas River furnished power for their flour mill, whose products were widely sought. There was also a woolen mill, a planing mill, a foundry, and a machine shop. The beer made by the community was famous all the country round, and for a time its pottery and tile works turned out interesting and quaint products. But one by one these small industries succumbed to the competition of the greater world. At last even an alien brew

supplanted the good local beer. When the railroad tapped the village, and it was incorporated (1884) and assumed an official worldliness with its mayor and eouncilmen, it lost its isolation, summer visitors flocked in, and a "calaboose" was needed for the benefit of the sojourners!

The third generation was now grown. A number of dissatisfied members had left. Many of the children never joined the society but found work elsewhere. A great deal of the work had to be done by hired help. Under the leadership of the younger element it was decided in 1898 to abandon communism. Appraisers and surveyors were set to work to parcel out the property. Each of the 136 members received a cash dividend, a home in the village, and a plot of land. The average value of each share, which was in the neighborhood of \$1500, was not a large return for three generations of communistic experimentation. But these had been, after all, years of moderate competence and quiet contentment, and if they took their toll in the coin of hope, as their song set forth, then these simple Württembergers were fully paid.

The Inspirationists were a sect that made many converts in Germany, Holland, and Switzerland in the eighteenth century. They believed in direct

revelations from God through chosen "instruments." In 1817, a new leader appeared among them in the person of Christian Metz, a man of great personal charm, worldly shrewdness, and spiritual fervor. Allied with him was Barbara Heynemann, a simple maid without education, who learned to read the Scriptures after she was twenty-three years of age. Endowed with the peculiar gift of "translation," she was cherished by the sect as an instrument of God for revealing His will.

To this pair came an inspiration to lead their harassed followers to America. In 1842 they purchased the Seneca Indian Reservation near Buffalo, New York. They called their new home Ebenezer, and in 1843 they organized the Ebenezer Society, under a constitution which pledged them to communism. Over eight hundred peasants and artisans joined the colony, and their industry soon had created a cluster of five villages with mills, workshops, schools, and dwellings. But they were continually annoyed by the Indians from whom they had purchased the site and were distracted by the rapidly growing city of Buffalo, which was only five miles away!

This threat of worldliness brought a revelation that they must seek greater seclusion. A large tract

on the Iowa River was purchased, and to this new site the population was gradually transferred. There they built Amana. Within a radius of six miles, five subsidiary villages sprang up, each one laid out like a German *dorf*, with its cluster of shops and mills, and the cottages scattered informally on the main road. When the railway tapped the neighborhood, the community in self-defense purchased the town that contained the railway station. So when the good Christian Metz died in 1867, at the age of seventy-two, his pious followers, thanks to his sagacity, were possessed of some twenty-six thousand acres of rich Iowa land and seven thriving villages, comfortably housing about 1400 of the faithful. Barbara Heynemann died in 1883, and since her death no "instrument" has been found to disclose the will of God. But many ponderous tomes of "revelations" have survived and these are faithfully read and their naïve personal directions and inhibitions are still generally obeyed. The Bible, however, remains the main guide of these people, and they follow its instructions with childish literalism. Until quite recently they clung to the simple dress and the austere life of their earlier years. The solidarity of the community has been maintained with rare skill. The "Great Council

of the Brethren" upon whom is laid the burden of directing all the affairs, has avoided government by mass meeting, discouraged irresponsible talk and criticism, and, as an aristocracy of elders, has shrewdly controlled the material and spiritual life of the community.

The society has received many new members. There have been accessions from Zoar and Economy and one or two Americans have joined. The "Great Council," in its desire to maintain the homogeneity of the group, rejects the large number of applications for membership received every year. Over sixty per cent of the young people who have left the community to try the world have come back to "colony trousers" or "colony skirts," symbols of the complete submergence of the individual.

Celibacy has been encouraged but never enjoined, and the young people are permitted to marry, if the Spirit gives its sanction, the Elders their consent, and if the man has reached the age of twenty-four years. The two sexes are rigidly separated in school, in church, at work, and in the communal dining rooms. Each family lives in a house, but there are communal kitchens, where meals are served to groups of twenty or more.

Every member receives an annual cash bonus varying from \$25 to \$75 and a pass book to record his credits at the "store." The work is doled out among the members, who take pride in the quality rather than in the quantity of their product. All forms of amusement are forbidden; music, which flourished in other German communities, is suppressed; and even reading for pleasure or information was until recently under the ban.

The only symbols of gayety in the villages are the flowers, and these are everywhere in lavish abundance, softening the austere lines of the plain and unpainted houses. No architect has been allowed to show his skill, no artist his genius, in the shaping of this rigorous life. But its industries flourish. Amana calico and Amana woolens are known in many markets. The livestock is of the finest breeds; the products of the fields and orchards are the choicest. But the modern visitor wonders how long this prosperity will be able to maintain that isolation which alone insured the communal solidarity. Already store clothes are being worn, photographs are seen on the walls, "worldly" furniture is being used, libraries, those openers of closed minds, are in every schoolhouse, and newspapers and magazines are "allowed."

The experiences of Eric Janson and his devotees whom he led out of Sweden to Bishop Hill Colony, in Illinois, are replete with dramatic and tragic details. Janson was a rugged Swedish peasant, whose eloquence and gift of second sight made him the prophet of the Devotionalists, a sect that attempted to reëstablish the simplicity of the primitive church among the Lutherans of Scandinavia. Driven from pillar to post by the relentless hatred of the Established Church, they sought refuge in America, where Janson planned a theocratic socialistic community. Its communism was based entirely upon religious convictions, for neither Janson nor any of his illiterate followers had heard of the politico-economic systems of French reformers. Over one thousand young and vigorous peasants followed him to America. The first contingent of four hundred arrived in 1846 and spent their first winter in untold miseries and privations, with barely sufficient food, but with enough spiritual fervor to kindle two religious services a day and three on Sunday. Attacking the vast prairies with their primitive implements, harvesting grain with the sickle and grinding it by hand when their water power gave out, sheltering themselves in tents and caves, enduring agues and fevers, hunger and cold,



the majority still remained loyal to the leader whose eloquence fired them with a sustaining hope. Thrift, unremitting toil, the wonderful fertility of the prairie, the high price of wheat, flax, and broom corn, were bound to bring prosperity. In 1848 they built a huge brick dormitory and dining hall, a great frame church, and a number of smaller dwellings. Improved housing at once told on the general health, though in the next year a scourge of cholera, introduced by some newcomer, claimed 143 members.

In the meantime John Root, an adventurer from Stockholm, who had served in the American army, arrived at the colony and soon fell in love with the cousin of Eric Janson. The prophet gave his consent to the marriage on condition that, if at any time Root wished to leave the colony, his wife should be permitted to remain if she desired. A written agreement acknowledged Root's consent to these conditions. He soon tired of a life for which he had not the remotest liking, and, failing to entice his wife away with him, he kidnaped her and forcibly detained her in Chicago, whence she was rescued by a valiant band of the colonists. In retaliation the irate husband organized a mob of frontiers folk to drive out the fanatics as they had a



short time before driven out Brigham Young and his Mormons. But the neighbors of the colonists, having learned their sterling worth, came to the rescue. Root then began legal proceedings against Janson. In May, 1850, while in court the renegade deliberately shot and killed the prophet. The community in despair awaited three days the return to life of the man whom they looked upon as a representative of Christ sent to earth to rebuild the Tabernacle.

Janson had been a very poor manager, however, and the colony was in debt. In order quickly to obtain money, he had sent Jonas Olsen, the ablest and strongest of his followers, to California to seek gold to wipe out the debt. Upon hearing of the tragedy, Olsen hastened back to Bishop Hill and was soon in charge of affairs. In 1853 he obtained for the colony a charter of incorporation which vested the entire management of the property in seven trustees. These men, under the by-laws adopted, became also the spiritual mentors, and the colonists, unacquainted with democratic usages in government, submitted willingly to the leadership of this oligarchy. A new era of great material prosperity now set in. The village was rebuilt. The great house was enlarged so

that all the inhabitants could be accommodated in its vast communal dining room. Trees were planted along the streets. Shops and mills were erected, and a hotel became the means of introducing strangers to the community.

Meanwhile Olsen was growing more and more arbitrary and, after a bitter controversy, he imposed celibacy upon the members. This was the beginning of the end. One of the trustees, Olaf Jansen, a good-natured peasant who could not keep his accounts but who had a peasant's sagacity for a bargain, wormed his way into financial control. He wanted to make the colony rich, but he led it to the verge of bankruptcy. He became a speculator and promoter. Stories of his shortcomings were whispered about and in 1860 the peasant colony revolted and deposed Olaf from office. He then had himself appointed receiver to wind up the corporation's affairs, and in the following year the communal property was distributed. Every member, male and female, thirty-five years of age received a full share which "consisted of 22 acres of land, one timber lot of nearly 2 acres, one town lot, and an equal part of all barns, houses, cattle, hogs, sheep or other domestic animals and all farming implements and household utensils." Those

under thirty-five received according to their age. Had these shares been unencumbered, this would have represented a fair return for their labor. But Olaf had made no half-way business of his financial ambitions, and the former members who now were melting peacefully and rather contentedly into the general American life found themselves saddled with his obligations. The "colony case" became famous among Illinois lawyers and dragged through twelve years of litigation. Thus the glowing fraternal communism of poor Janson ended in the drab discord of an American lawsuit.

In 1862 the followers of Jacob Hutter, a Mennonite martyr who was burned at the stake in Innsbruck in the sixteenth century, founded the Old Elmspring Community on the James River in South Dakota. During the Thirty Years' War these saintly Quaker-like German folk had found refuge in Moravia, whence they had been driven into Hungary, later into Rumania, and then into Russia. As their objection to military service brought them into conflict with the Czar's government, they finally determined to migrate to America. In 1874 they had all reached South Dakota, where they now live in five small communities. Scarcely four hundred all told,

they cling to their ancient ambition to keep themselves "unspotted from the world," and so have evolved a self-sustaining communal life, characterized by great simplicity of dress, of speech, and of living. They speak German and refrain entirely from voting and from other political activity. They are farmers and practise only those handicrafts which are necessary to their own communal welfare.

While most of these German sectarian communities had only a slight economic effect upon the United States, their influence upon immigration has been extensive. In the early part of the last century, it was difficult to obtain authentic news concerning America in the remote hamlets of Europe. All sorts of vague and grotesque notions about this country were afloat. Every member of these communities, when he wrote to those left behind, became a living witness of the golden opportunities offered in the new land. And, unquestionably, a considerable share of the great German influx in the middle of the nineteenth century can be traced to the dissemination of knowledge by this means. Mikkelsen says of the Jansonists that their "letters home concerning the new country paved the way for that mighty tide of Swedish immigration which

in a few years began to roll in upon Illinois and the Northwest."

The Shakers are the oldest and the largest communistic sect to find a congenial home in America. The cult originated in Manchester, England, with Ann Lee, a "Shaking Quaker," who never learned to read or write but depended upon revelation for doctrine and guidance. "By a direct revelation," says the Shaker Compendium, she was "instructed to come to America." Obedient to the vision, she sailed from Liverpool in the summer of 1774, accompanied by six men and two women, among whom were her husband, a brother, and a niece. This little flock settled in the forests near Albany, New York. Abandoned by her husband, the prophetess went from place to place, proclaiming her peculiar doctrines. Soon she became known as "Mother Ann" and was reputed to have supernatural powers. At the time of her death in 1784 she had numerous followers in western New England and eastern New York.

In 1787 they founded their first Shaker community at Mount Lebanon. Within a few years other societies were organized in New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine, and Connecticut. On the wave of the great religious revival at the

beginning of the nineteenth century their doctrines were carried west. The cult achieved its highest prosperity in the decade following 1830, when it numbered eighteen societies and about six thousand members.

In shrewd and capable hands, the sect soon had both an elaborate system of theology based upon the teachings of Mother Ann and also an effective organization. The communal life, ordaining celibacy, based on industry, and constructed in the strictest economy, achieved material prosperity and evidently brought spiritual consolation to those who committed themselves to its isolation. Although originating in England, the sect is confined wholly to America and has from the first recruited its membership almost wholly from native Americans.

Another of these social experiments was the Oneida Community and its several ephemeral branches. Though it was of American origin and the members were almost wholly American, it deserves passing mention. The founder, John Humphrey Noyes, a graduate of Dartmouth and a Yale divinity student, conceived a system of communal life which should make it possible for the individual to live without sin. This perfectionism, he believed, necessitated

the abolition of private property through communism, the abolition of sickness through complete coöperation of the individual with God, and the abolition of the family through a "scientific" coöperation of the sexes. The Oneida Community was financially very prosperous. Its "stirpiculture," Noyes's high-sounding synonym for free love, brought it, however, into violent conflict with public opinion, and in 1879 "complex marriages" gave way to monogamous families. In the following year the communistic holding of property gave way to a joint stock company, under whose skillful management the prosperity of the community continues today.

The American Utopias based upon an assumed economic altruism were much more numerous than those founded primarily upon religion but, as they were recruited almost wholly from Americans, they need engage our attention only briefly. There were two groups of economic communistic experiments, similar in their general characteristics but differing in their origin. One took its inspiration directly from Robert Owen, the distinguished philanthropist and successful cotton manufacturer of Scotland; the other from Fourier, the noted French social philosopher.



In 1825 Robert Owen purchased New Harmony, Rapp's village in Indiana and its thirty thousand appurtenant acres. When Owen came to America he was already famous. Great throngs flocked to hear this practical man utter the most visionary sentiments. At Washington, for instance, he lectured to an auditory that included great senators and famous representatives, members of the Supreme Court and of the Cabinet, President Monroe and Adams, the President-elect. He displayed to his eager hearers the plans and specifications of the new human order, his glorified apartment house with all the external paraphernalia of selective human perfection drawn to scale.

For a brief period New Harmony was the communistic capital of the world. It was discussed everywhere and became, says its chronicler, "the rendezvous of the enlightened and progressive people from all over the United States and northern Europe." It achieved a sort of motley cosmopolitanism. A "Boat Load of Knowledge" carried from Pittsburgh the most distinguished group of scientists that had hitherto been brought together in America. It included William Maclure, a Scotchman who came to America, at the age of thirty-three, ambitious to make a geological survey

of the country and whose learning and energy soon earned him the title of "Father of American Geology"; Thomas Say, "the Father of American Zoölogy"; Charles Alexander Lesueur, a distinguished naturalist from the *Jardin des Plantes* of Paris; Constantine S. Rafinesque, a scientific nomad whose studies of fishes took him everywhere and whose restless spirit forbade him remaining long anywhere; Gerard Troost, a Dutch scientist who later did pioneer work in western geology; Joseph Neef, a well-known Pestalozzian educator, together with two French experts in that system; and Owen's four brilliant sons. A few artists and musicians and all sorts of reformers, including Fanny Wright, an ardent and very advanced suffragette, joined these scientists in the new Eden. Owen had issued a universal invitation to the "industrious and well disposed," but his project offered also the lure of a free meal ticket for the improvident and the glitter of novelty for the restless.

"I am come to this country," Owen said in his opening words at New Harmony, "to introduce an entire new state of society, to change it from the ignorant, selfish system to an enlightened social system, which shall gradually unite all interests

into one, and remove all causes for contests between individuals."<sup>1</sup> But the germs of dissolution were already present in the extreme individuality of the members of this new society. Here was no homogeneous horde of docile German peasants waiting to be commanded. What Father Rapp could do, Owen could not. The sifting process had begun too late. Seven different constitutions issued in rapid succession attempted in vain to discover a common bond of action. In less than two years Owen's money was gone, and nine hundred or more disillusioned persons rejoined the more individualistic world. Many of them subsequently achieved distinction in professional and public callings. Owen's widely advertised experiment was fecund, however, and produced some eleven other short-lived communistic attempts, of which the most noted were at Franklin, Haverstraw, and Coxsackie in New York, Yellow Springs and Kendal in Ohio, and Forestville and Macluria in Indiana.

Fourierism found its principal apostle in this country in Arthur Brisbane, whose *Social Destiny of Man*, published in 1840, brought to America the French philosopher's naïve, social regimen of

<sup>1</sup> *The New Harmony Movement*, by G. B. Lockwood, p. 83.

reducing the world of men to simple units called phalanxes, whose barrack-like routine should insure plenty, equality, and happiness. Horace Greeley, with characteristic, erratic eagerness, pounced upon the new gospel, and Brisbane obtained at once a wide circle of sympathetic readers through the *Tribune*. Thirty-four phalanxes were organized in a short time, most of them with an incredible lack of foresight. They usually lasted until the first payment on the mortgage was due, though a few weathered the buffetings of fortune for several years. Brook Farm in Massachusetts and the Wisconsin phalanx each endured six years, and the North American phalanx at Red Bank, New Jersey, lasted thirteen years.

Icaria is a romantic sequel to the Owen and Fourier colonies. It antedated Brisbane's revival of Fourierism, was encouraged by Owenism, survived both, and formed a living link between the utopianism of the early nineteenth century and the utilitarian socialism of the twentieth. Étienne Cabet was one of those interesting Frenchmen whose fertile minds and instinct for rapid action made France during the nineteenth century kaleidoscopic with social and political events. Though educated for the bar, Cabet devoted

himself to social and political reform. As a young man he was a director in that powerful secret order, the Carbonari, and was elected to the French chamber of deputies, but his violent attitude toward the Government was such that in 1834 he was obliged to flee to London to escape imprisonment. Here, unmolested, he devoted himself for five years to social and historical research. He returned to France in 1839 and in the following year published his *Voyage en Icarie*, a book that at once took its place by the side of Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*. Cabet pictured in his volume an ideal society where plenty should be a substitute for poverty and equality a remedy for class egoism. So great was the cogency of his writing that Icaria became more than a mere vision to hundreds of thousands in those years of social ferment and democratic aspirations. From a hundred sources the demand arose to translate the book into action. Cabet thereupon framed a constitution and sought the means of founding a real Icaria. After consulting Robert Owen, he unfortunately fell into the clutches of some Cincinnati land speculators and chose a site for his colony in the northeastern part of Texas. When the announcement was made in his paper, *Le Populaire*, the responses were so numerous

that Cabet believed that "more than a million coöperators" were eager for the experiment.

In February, 1848, sixty-nine young men, all carefully selected volunteers, were sent forth from Havre as the vanguard of the contemplated exodus. But the movement was halted by the turn of great events. Twenty days after the young men sailed, the French Republic was proclaimed, and in the fervor and distraction of this immediate political victory the new and distant utopia seemed to thousands less alluring than it had been before. The group of young volunteers, however, reached America. After heart-rending disillusionment in the swamps and forests of Louisiana and on the raw prairies of Texas, they made their way back to New Orleans in time to meet Cabet and four hundred Icarians, who arrived early in 1849. The Gallic instinct for factional differences soon began to assert itself in repeated division and subdivision on the part of the idealists. One-half withdrew at New Orleans to work out their individual salvation. The remainder followed Cabet to the deserted Mormon town of Nauvoo, Illinois, where vacant houses offered immediate shelter and where they enjoyed an interval of prosperity. The French genius for music, for theatricals, and for literature relieved



them from the tedium that characterized most co-operative colonies. Soon their numbers increased to five hundred by accessions which, with few exceptions, were French.

But Cabet was not a practical leader. His pamphlet published in German in 1854, entitled *If I had half a million dollars*, reveals the naïveté of his mind. He wanted to find money, not to make it. The society soon became involved in a controversy in which Cabet's immediate following were outnumbered. The minority petulantly stopped working but continued to eat. "The majority decided that those who would not work should not eat . . . and gave notice that those who absented themselves from labor would be cut off from rations."<sup>1</sup> As a result, Cabet, in 1856, was expelled from his own Icaria! With 170 faithful adherents he went to St. Louis, and there a few days later he died. The minority buried their leader, but their faith in communal life survived this setback. At Cheltenham, a suburb of St. Louis, they acquired a small estate, where proximity to the city enabled the members to get work. Here they lived together six years before division disrupted them permanently.

<sup>1</sup> *Icaria, A Chapter in the History of Communism*, by Albert Shaw, p. 58.



At Nauvoo in the meantime there had been other secessions, and the property, in 1857, was in the hands of a receiver. The plucky and determined remnant, however, removed to Iowa, where on the prairie near Corning they planted a new Icaria. Here, by hard toil and in extreme poverty, but in harmony and contentment, the communists lived until, in 1876, the younger members wished to adopt advanced methods in farming, in finance, and in management. The older men, with wisdom acquired through bitter experience, refused to alter their methods. The younger party won a lawsuit to annul the communal charter. The property was divided, and again there were two Icarias, the "young party" retaining the old site and the "old party" moving on and founding New Icaria, a few miles from the old. But Old Icaria was soon split: one faction removed to California, where the Icaria-Speranza community was founded; and the other remained at Old Icaria. Both came to grief in 1888. Finally in 1895 New Icaria, then reduced to a few veterans, was dissolved by a unanimous vote of the community.

In 1854 Victor Considérant, the French socialist, planted a Fourieristic phalanx in Texas, under the

liberal patronage of J. B. A. Godin, the godfather of Fourierism in France who founded at Guise the only really successful phalanx. A French communistic colony was also attempted at Silkville, Kansas. But both ventures lasted only a few years. Since the subsidence of these French communistic experiments, there have been many sporadic attempts at founding idealistic communities in the United States. Over fifty have been tried since the Civil War. Nearly all were established under American auspices and did not lure many foreigners.

## CHAPTER V

### THE IRISH INVASION

AFTER the Revolution, immigrants began to filter into America from Great Britain and continental Europe. No record was kept of their arrival, and their numbers have been estimated at from 4000 to 10,000 a year, on the average. These people came nearly all from Great Britain and were driven to migrate by financial and political conditions.

In 1819 Congress passed a law requiring Collectors of Customs to keep a record of passengers arriving in their districts, together with their age, sex, occupation, and the country whence they came, and to report this information to the Secretary of State. This was the Federal Government's first effort to collect facts concerning immigration. The law was defective, yet it might have yielded valuable results had it been intelligently enforced.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The immigration reports were perfunctory and lacking in accuracy. Passengers were frequently listed as belonging to the

From all available collateral sources it appears that the official figures greatly understated the actual number of arrivals. Great Britain kept an official record of those who emigrated from her ports to the United States and the numbers so listed are nearly as large as the total immigration from all sources reported by the United States officials during a time when a heavy influx is known to have been coming from Germany and Switzerland.

Inaccurate as these figures are, they nevertheless are a barometer indicating the rising pressure of immigration. The first official figures show that in 1820 there arrived 8385 aliens of whom 7691 were Europeans. Of these 3614, or nearly one-half, came from Ireland. Until 1850 this proportion was maintained. Here was evidence of the first ground swell of immigration to the United States whose subsequent waves in sixty years swept to America one-half of the entire population of the Little Green Isle. Since 1820 over four and a quarter million

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country whence they sailed. An Irishman taking passage from Liverpool was quite as likely to be reported English as Irish. Large numbers of immigrants were counted who merely landed in New York and proceeded immediately to Canada, while many thousands who landed in Canada and moved at once across the border into northern New York and the West did not appear in the reports.

Irish immigrants have found their way hither. In 1900 there were nearly five million persons in the United States descended from Irish parentage. They comprise today ten per cent of our foreign born population.

The discontent and grievances of the Irish had a vivid historical background in their own country. There were four principal causes which induced the transplanting of the race: rebellion, famine, restrictive legislation, and absentee landlordism. Every uprising of this bellicose people from the time of Cromwell onward had been followed by voluntary and involuntary exile. It is said that Cromwell's Government transported many thousand Irish to the West Indies. Many of these exiles subsequently found their way to the Carolinas, Virginia, and other colonies. After the great Irish rebellion of 1798 and again after Robert Emmet's melancholy failure in the rising of 1803 many fled across the sea. The Act of Union in 1801 brought "no submissive love for England," and constant political agitations for which the Celtic Irish need but little stimulus have kept the pathway to America populous.

The harsh penal laws of two centuries ago prescribing transportation and long terms of penal

servitude were a compelling agency in driving the Irish to America. Illiberal laws against religious nonconformists, especially against the Catholics, closed the doors of political advancement in their faces, submitted them to humiliating discriminations, and drove many from the island. Finally, the selfish Navigation Laws forbade both exportation of cattle to England and the sending of foodstuffs to the colonies, dealing thereby a heavy blow to Irish agriculture. These restrictions were followed by other inhibitions until almost every industry or business in which the Irish engaged was unduly limited and controlled. It should, however, not be forgotten that these restrictions bore with equal weight upon the Ulster settlers from Scotland and England, who managed somehow to endure them successfully.

Absentee landlordism was oppressive both to the cotter's body and to his soul, for it not only bound him to perpetual poverty but kindled within him a deep sense of injustice. The historian, Justin McCarthy, says that the Irishman "regarded the right to have a bit of land, his share, exactly as other people regard the right to live." So political and economic conditions combined to feed the discontent of a people peculiarly sensitive to wrongs and swift in their resentments.

But the most potent cause of the great Irish influx into America was famine in Ireland. The economist may well ascribe Irish failure to the potato. Here was a crop so easy of culture and of such nourishing qualities that it led to overpopulation and all its attendant ills. The failure of this crop was indeed an "overwhelming disaster," for, according to Justin McCarthy, the Irish peasant with his wife and his family lived on the potato, and whole generations grew up, lived, married, and passed away without ever having tasted meat. When the cold and damp summer of 1845 brought the potato rot, the little, overpopulated island was facing dire want. But when the next two years brought a plant disease that destroyed the entire crop, then famine and fever claimed one quarter of the eight million inhabitants. The pitiful details of this national disaster touched American hearts. Fleets of relief ships were sent across from America, and many a shipload of Irish peasants was brought back. In 1845 over 44,821 came; 1847 saw this number rise to 105,536 and in the next year to 112,934. Rebellion following the famine swelled the number of immigrants until Ireland was left a land of old people with a fast shrinking population.



There is a prevailing notion that this influx after the great famine was the commencement of Irish migration. In reality it was only the climax. Long before this, Irishmen were found in the colonies, chiefly as indentured servants; they were in the Continental Army as valiant soldiers; they were in the western flux that filled the Mississippi Valley as useful pioneers. How many there were we do not know. As early as 1737, however, there were enough in Boston to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, and in 1762 they poured libations to their favorite saint in New York City, for the *Mercury* in announcing the meeting said, "Gentlemen that please to attend will meet with the best Usage." On March 17, 1776, the English troops evacuated Boston and General Washington issued the following order on that date:

Parole Boston

Countersign St. Patrick

The regiments under marching orders to march tomorrow morning. By His Excellency's command.

Brigadier of the Day  
GEN. JOHN SULLIVAN.

Thus did the Patriot Army gracefully acknowledge the day and the people.

In 1784, on the first St. Patrick's Day after the evacuation of New York City by the British, there was a glorious celebration "spent in festivity and mirth." As the newspaper reporter put it, "the greatest unanimity and conviviality pervaded" a 'numerous and jovial company.'

Branches of the Society of United Irishmen were formed in American cities soon after the founding of the order in Ireland. Many veterans of '98 found their way to America, and between 1800 and 1820 many thousand followed the course of the setting sun. Their number cannot be ascertained; but there were not a few. In 1818 Irish immigrant associations were organized by the Irish in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore to aid the newcomers in finding work. Many filtered into the United States from Canada, Newfoundland, and the West Indies. These earlier arrivals were not composed of the abjectly poor who comprised the majority of the great exodus, and especially among the political exiles there were to be found men of some means and education.

America became extremely popular in Ireland after the Revolution of 1776, partly because the English were defeated, partly because of Irish democratic aspirations, but particularly because it

was a land of generous economic and political possibilities. The Irish at once claimed a kinship with the new republic, and the ocean became less of a barrier than St. George's Channel.

"The States," as they were called, became a synonym of abundance. The most lavish reports of plenty were sent back by the newcomers — of meat daily, of white bread, of comfortable clothing. "There is a great many ill conveniences here," writes one, "but no empty bellies." In England and Ireland and Scotland the number of poor who longed for this abundance exceeded the capacity of the boats. Many who would have willingly gone to America lacked the passage money. The Irish peasant, born and reared in extreme poverty, was peculiarly unable to scrape together enough to pay his way. The assistance which he needed, however, was forthcoming from various sources. Friends and relatives in America sent him money; in later years this practice was very common. Societies were organized to help those who could not help themselves. Railroad and canal companies, in great need of labor, imported workmen by the thousands and advanced their passage money. And finally, the local authorities found shipping their paupers to another country a convenient way

of getting rid of them. England early resorted to the same method. In 1849 the Irish poor law guardians were given authority to borrow money for such "assistance," as it was called. In 1881 the Land Commission and in 1882 the Commissioner of Public Works were authorized to advance money for this purpose. In 1884 and 1885 over sixteen thousand persons were thus assisted from Galway and Mayo counties.

Long before the great Irish famine of 1846-47 America appeared like a mirage, and wondering peasants in their dire distress exaggerated its opulence and opportunities. They braved the perils of the sea and trusted to luck in the great new world. The journey in itself was no small adventure. There were some sailings directly from Ireland; but most of the Irish immigrants were collected at Liverpool by agents not always scrupulous in their dealings. A hurried inspection at Liverpool gained them the required medical certificates, and they were packed into the ships. Of the voyage one passenger who made the journey from Belfast in 1795 said: "The slaves who are carried from the coast of Africa have much more room allowed them than the immigrants who pass from Ireland to America, for the avarice of

captains in that trade is such that they think they can never load their vessels sufficiently, and they trouble their heads in general no more about the accommodation and storage of their passengers than of any other lumber aboard." When the great immigrant invasion of America began, there were not half enough ships for the passengers, all were cruelly overcrowded, and many were so filthy that even American port officials refused a landing before cleansing. Under such conditions sickness was a matter of course, and of the hordes who started for the promised land thousands perished on the way.<sup>1</sup>

Hope sustained the voyagers. But what must have been the disappointment of thousands when they landed! No ardent welcome awaited them, nor even jobs for the majority. Alas for the rosy dreams of opulence! Here was a prosaic place

<sup>1</sup> According to the *Edinburgh Review* of July, 1854, "Liverpool was crowded with emigrants, and ships could not be found to do the work. The poor creatures were packed in dense masses, in ill-ventilated and unseaworthy vessels, under charge of improper masters, and the natural results followed. Pestilence chased the fugitive to complete the work of famine. Fifteen thousand out of ninety thousand emigrants in British bottoms, in 1847, died on the passage or soon after arrival. The American vessels, owing to a stringent passenger law, were better managed, but the hospitals of New York and Boston were nevertheless crowded with patients from Irish estates."

where toil and sweat were the condition of mere existence. As the poor creatures had no means of moving on, they huddled in the ports of arrival. Almshouses were filled, beggars wandered in every street, and these peasants accustomed to the soil and the open country were congested in the cities, unhappy misfits in an entirely new economic environment. Unskilled in the handicrafts, they were forced to accept the lot of the common laborer. Fortunately, the great influx came at the time of rapid turnpike, canal, and railroad expansion. Thousands found their way westward with contractors' gangs. The free lands, however, did not lure them. They preferred to remain in the cities. New York in 1850 sheltered 133,000 Irish. Philadelphia, Boston, New Orleans, Cincinnati, Albany, Baltimore, and St. Louis, followed, in the order given, as favorite lodging places, and there was not one rapidly growing western city, such as Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, and Chicago, that did not have its "Irish town" or "Shanty town" where the immigrants clung together.

Their brogue and dress provoked ridicule; their poverty often threw them upon the community; the large percentage of illiteracy among them evoked little sympathy; their inclinations towards

intemperance and improvidence were not neutralized by their great good nature and open-handedness; their religion reawoke historical bitterness; their genius for politics aroused jealousy; their proclivity to unite in clubs, associations, and semi-military companies made them the objects of official suspicion; and above all, their willingness to assume the offensive, to resent instantly insult or intimidation, brought them into frequent and violent contact with their new neighbors. "America for Americans" became the battle cry of reactionaries, who organized the American or "Know-Nothing" party and sought safety at the polls. While all foreign elements were grouped together, indiscriminately, in the mind of the nativist, the Irishman unfortunately was the special object of his spleen, because he was concentrated in the cities and therefore offered a visual and concrete example of the danger of foreign mass movements, because he was a Roman Catholic and thus awakened ancient religious prejudices that had long been slumbering, and because he fought back instantly, valiantly, and vehemently.

Popular suspicion against the foreigner in America began almost as soon as immigration assumed large proportions. In 1816 conservative newspapers



called attention to the new problems that the Old World was thrusting upon the New: the poverty of the foreigner, his low standard of living, his illiteracy and slovenliness, his ignorance of American ways and his unwillingness to submit to them, his clannishness, the danger of his organizing and capturing the political offices and ultimately the Government. In addition to the alarmist and the prejudiced, careful and thoughtful citizens were aroused to the danger. Unfortunately, however, religious antagonisms were aroused and, as is always the case, these differences awakened the profoundest prejudices and passions of the human heart. There were many towns in New England and in the West where Roman Catholicism was unknown except as a traditional enemy of free institutions. It is difficult to realize in these days of tolerance the feelings aroused in such communities when Catholic churches, parochial schools, and convents began to appear among them; and when the devotees of this faith displayed a genius for practical politics, instinctive distrust developed into lively suspicion.

The specter of ecclesiastical authority reared itself, and the question of sharing public school moneys with parochial schools and of reading the

Bible in the public schools became a burning issue. Here and there occurred clashes that were more than barroom brawls. Organized gangs infested the cities. Both sides were sustained and encouraged by partisan papers, and on several occasions the antagonism spent themselves in riots and destruction. In 1834 the Ursuline convent at Charlestown, near Boston, was sacked and burned. Ten years later occurred the great anti-Irish riots in Philadelphia, in which two Catholic churches and a schoolhouse were burned by a mob inflamed to hysteria by one of the leaders who held up a torn American flag and shouted, "This is the flag that was trampled on by Irish papists." Prejudice accompanied fear into every city and "patented citizens" were often subject to abuse and even persecution. Tammany Hall in New York City became the political fortress of the Irish. Election riots of the first magnitude were part of the routine of elections, and the "Bloody Sixth Ward Boys" were notorious for their hooliganism on election day.

The suggestions of the nativists that paupers and criminals be excluded from immigration were not embodied into law. The movement soon was lost in the greater questions which slavery was thrusting into the foreground. When the fight

with nativism was over, the Irish were in possession of the cities. They displayed an amazing aptitude for political plotting and organization and for that prime essential to political success popularly known as "mixing." Policemen and aldermen, ward heelers, bosses, and mayors, were known by their brogue. The Irish demonstrated their loyalty to the Union in the Civil War and merged readily into American life after the lurid prejudices against them faded.

Unfortunately, a great deal of this prejudice was revived when the secret workings of an Irish organization in Pennsylvania were unearthed. Among the anthracite coal miners a society was formed, probably about 1854, called the Molly Maguires, a name long known in Ireland. The members were all Irish, professed the Roman Catholic faith, and were active in the Ancient Order of Hibernians. The Church, the better class of Irishmen, and the Hibernians, however, were shocked by the doings of the Molly Maguires and utterly disowned them. They began their career of blackmail and bullying by sending threats and death notices embellished with crude drawings of coffins and pistols to those against whom they fancied they had a grievance, usually the mine boss or an unpopular foreman.

If the recipient did not heed the threat, he was waylaid and beaten and his family was abused. By the time of the Civil War these bullies had terrorized the entire anthracite region. Through their political influence they elected sheriffs and constables, chiefs of police and county commissioners. As they became bolder, they substituted arson and murder for threats and bullying, and they made life intolerable by their reckless brutality. It was impossible to convict them, for the hatred against an informer, inbred in every Irishman through generations of experience in Ireland, united with fear in keeping competent witnesses from the courts. Finally the president of one of the large coal companies employed James McParlan, a remarkably clever Irish detective. He joined the Mollies, somehow eluded their suspicions, and slowly worked his way into their confidence. An unusually brutal and cowardly murder in 1875 proved his opportunity. When the courts finished with the Mollies, nineteen of their members had been hanged, a large number imprisoned, and the organization was completely wiped out.

Meantime the Fenian movement served to keep the Irish in the public eye. This was no less than an attempt to free Ireland and disrupt the British

Empire, using the United States as a fulcrum, the Irish in America as the power, and Canada as the lever. James Stephens, who organized the Irish Republican Brotherhood, came to America in 1858 to start a similar movement. After the Civil War, which supplied a training school for whole regiments of Irish soldiers, a convention of Fenians was held at Philadelphia in 1865 at which an "Irish Republic" was organized, with a full complement of officers, a Congress, a President, a Secretary of the Treasury, a Secretary of War, in fact, a replica of the American Federal Government. It assumed the highly absurd and dangerous position that it actually possessed sovereignty. The luxurious mansion of a pill manufacturer in Union Square, New York, was transformed into its government house, and bonds, embellished with shamrocks and harps and a fine portrait of Wolfe Tone, were issued, payable "ninety days after the establishment of the Irish Republic." Differences soon arose, and Stephens, who had made his escape from Richmond, near Dublin, where he had been in prison, hastened to America to compose the quarrel which had now assumed true Hibernian proportions. An attempt to land an armed gang on the Island of Campo Bello on the coast of New Brunswick was

frustrated; invaders from Vermont spent a night over the Canadian border before they were driven back; and for several days Fort Erie on Niagara River was held by about 1500 Fenians.<sup>1</sup> General Meade was thereupon sent by the Federal authorities to put an end to these ridiculous breaches of neutrality.

Neither Meade nor any other authority, however, could stop the flow of Fenian adjectives that now issued from a hundred indignation meetings all over the land when Canada, after due trial, proceeded to sentence the guilty culprits captured in the "Battle of Limestone Ridge," as the tussle with Canadian regulars near Fort Erie was called. Newspapers abounded with tales of the most startling designs upon Canada and Britain. There then occurred a strong reaction to the Fenian movement, and the American people were led to wonder how much of truth there was in a statement made by Thomas D'Arcy McGee.<sup>2</sup> "This very Fenian organization in the United States," he said, "what does it really

<sup>1</sup> Oberholtzer, *History of the United States since the Civil War*, vol. 1, p. 526 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas D'Arcy McGee (1825-1868), one of the leaders of the "Young Ireland" party, fled for political reasons to the United States in 1848, where he established the *New York Nation* and the *American Celt*. When he changed his former attitude of opposition to British rule in Ireland he was attacked by the extreme

prove but that the Irish are still an alien population, camped but not settled in America, with foreign hopes and aspirations, unshared by the people among whom they live?"

The Irishman today is an integral part of every large American community. Although the restrictive legislation of two centuries ago has long been repealed and a new land system has brought great prosperity to his island home, the Irishman has not abated one whit in his temperamental attitude towards England and as a consequence some 40,000 or 50,000 of his fellow countrymen come to the United States every year. Here he has been dispossessed of his monopoly of shovel and pick by the French Canadian in New England and by the

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Irish patriots in the United States and in consequence moved to Canada, where he founded the *New Era* and began to practice law. Subsequently, with the support of the Irish Canadians, he represented Montreal in the Parliament of United Canada (1858) and was President of the Council (1862) in the John Sandfield Macdonald Administration. When the Irish were left unrepresented in the reorganized Cabinet in the following year, McGee became an adherent of Sir John A. Macdonald, and in 1864 he was made Minister of Agriculture in the Taché-Macdonald Administration. An ardent supporter of the progressive policies of his adopted country, he was one of the Fathers of Confederation and was a member of the first Dominion Parliament in 1867. His denunciations, both in Ireland (1865) and in Canada, of the policies and activities of the Fenians led to his assassination at Ottawa on April 7, 1868.



Italian, Syrian, and Armenian in other parts of the country. He finds work in factories, for he still shuns the soil, much as he professes to love the "old sod." A great change has come over the economic condition of the second and third generation of Irish immigrants. Their remarkable buoyancy of temperament is everywhere displayed. Bridget's daughter has left the kitchen and is a school teacher, a stenographer, a saleswoman, a milliner, or a dress-maker; her son is a clerk, a bookkeeper, a traveling salesman, or a foreman. Wherever the human touch is the essential of success, there you find the Irish. That is why in some cities one-half the teachers are Irish; why salesmanship lures them; why they are the most successful walking delegates, solicitors, agents, foremen, and contractors. In the higher walks of life you find them where dash, brilliance, cleverness, and emotion are demanded. The law and the priesthood utilize their eloquence, journalism their keen insight into the human side of news, and literature their imagination and humor. They possess a positive genius for organization and management. The labor unions are led by them; and what would municipal politics be without them? The list of eminent names which they have contributed to these callings will increase

as their generations multiply in the favorable American environment. But remote indeed is the day and complex must be the experience that will erase the memory of the ancient Erse proverb, which their racial temperament evoked: "Contention is better than loneliness."

## CHAPTER VI

### THE TEUTONIC TIDE

As the Irish wave of immigration receded the Teutonic wave rose and brought the second great influx of foreigners to American shores. A greater ethnic contrast could scarcely be imagined than that which was now afforded by these two races, the phlegmatic, plodding German and the vibrant Irish, a contrast in American life as a whole which was soon represented in miniature on the vaudeville stage by popular burlesque representations of both types. The one was the opposite of the other in temperament, in habits, in personal ambitions. The German sought the land, was content to be let alone, had no desire to command others or to mix with them, but was determined to be reliable, philosophically took things as they came, met opposition with patience, clung doggedly to a few cherished convictions, and sought passionately to possess a home and a family, to master some minute

mechanical or technical detail, and to take his leisure and his amusements in his own customary way.

The reports of the Immigration Commissioner disclose the fact that well over five and a third millions of Germans migrated to America between 1823 and 1910. If to this enormous number were added those of German blood who came from Austria and the German cantons of Switzerland, from Luxemburg and the German settlements of Russia, it would reach a grand total of well over seven million Germans who have sought an ampler life in America. The Census of 1910 reports "that there were 8,282,618 white persons in the United States having Germany as their country of origin, comprising 2,501,181 who were born in Germany, 3,911,847 born in the United States both of whose parents were born in Germany, and 1,869,590 born in the United States and having one parent born in the United States and the other in Germany."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to the Census of 1910 the nationality of the total number of white persons of foreign stock in the United States is distributed chiefly as follows:

Germany	8,282,618	or	25.7 per cent
Ireland	4,504,360	or	14.0 " "
Canada	2,754,615	or	8.6 " "
Russia	2,541,649	or	7.9 " "
England	2,322,442	or	7.2 " "
Italy	2,098,360	or	6.5 " "
Austria	2,001,559	or	6.2 " "

The coming of the Germans may be divided into three quite distinct migrations: the early, the middle, and the recent. The first period includes all who came before the radical ferment which began to agitate Europe after the Napoleonic wars. The Federal census of 1790 discloses 176,407 Germans living in America. But German writers usually maintain that there were from 225,000 to 250,000 Germans in the colonies at the time of the Declaration of Independence. They had been driven from the fatherland by religious persecution and economic want. Every German state contributed to their number, but the bulk of this migration came from the Palatinate, Württemberg, Baden, and Alsace, and the German cantons of Switzerland. The majority were of the peasant and artisan class who usually came over as redemptioners. Yet there were not wanting among them many persons of means and of learning.

Pennsylvania was the favorite distributing point for these German hosts. Thence they pushed

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Furthermore, the significance of the foreign born element in the population of the United States can be gathered from the fact that, in 1910, of the 91,972,266 inhabitants of the United States, no less than 13,515,886 or 14.6 per cent were born in some other country.

southward through the beautiful Shenandoah Valley into Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, and northward into New Jersey. Large numbers entered at Charleston and thence went to the frontiers of South Carolina. The Mohawk Valley in New York and the Berkshires of Massachusetts harbored many. But not all of them moved inland. They were to be found scattered on the coast from Maine to Georgia. Boston, New York City, Baltimore, New Bern, Wilmington, Charleston, and Savannah, all counted Germans in their populations. However strictly these German neighborhoods may have maintained the customs of their native land, the people thoroughly identified themselves with the patriot cause and supplied soldiers, leaders, money, and enthusiasm to the cause of the Revolutionary War.

Benjamin Rush, the distinguished Philadelphia physician and publicist, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, wrote in 1789 a description of the Germans of Pennsylvania which would apply generally to all German settlements at that time and to many of subsequent date. The Pennsylvania German farmer, he says, was distinguished above everything else for his self-denying thrift, housing his horses and cattle in commodious,

warm barns, while he and his family lived in a log hut until he was well able to afford a more comfortable house; selling his "most profitable grain, which is wheat" and "eating that which is less profitable but more nourishing, that is, rye or Indian corn"; breeding the best of livestock so that "a German horse is known in every part of the State" for his "extraordinary size or fat"; clearing his land thoroughly, not "as his English or Irish neighbors"; cultivating the most bountiful gardens and orchards; living frugally, working constantly, fearing God and debt, and rearing large families. "A German farm may be distinguished," concludes this writer, "from the farms of other citizens by the superior size of their barns, the plain but compact form of their houses, the height of their enclosures, the extent of their orchards, the fertility of their fields, the luxuriance of their meadows, and a general appearance of plenty and neatness in everything that belongs to them."<sup>1</sup> Rush's praise of the German mechanics is not less stinted. They were found in that day mainly as "weavers, taylors, tanners, shoe-makers, comb-makers, smiths of all kinds, butchers, paper makers, watchmakers,

<sup>1</sup> *An Account of the Manners of the German Inhabitants of Pennsylvania.*



and sugar bakers." Their first desire was "to become freeholders," and they almost invariably succeeded. German merchants and bankers also prospered in Philadelphia, Germantown, Lancaster, and other Pennsylvania towns. One-third of the population of Pennsylvania, Rush says, was of German origin, and for their convenience a German edition of the laws of the State was printed.

After the Revolution, a number of the Hessian hirelings who had been brought over by the British settled in America. They usually became farmers, although some of the officers taught school. They joined the German settlements, avoiding the English-speaking communities in the United States because of the resentment shown towards them. Their number is unknown. Frederick Kapp, a German writer, estimates that, of the 29,875 sent over, 12,562 never returned — but he fails to tell us how many of these remained because of Yankee bullets or bayonets.

The second period of German migration began about 1820 and lasted through the Civil War. Before 1830 the number of immigrants fluctuated between 200 and 2000 a year; in 1832 it exceeded 10,000; in 1834 it was over 17,000; three years later it reached nearly 24,000; between 1845 and 1860

there arrived 1,250,000, and 200,000 came during the Civil War.

There were several causes, working in close conjunction, that impelled these thousands to leave Germany. Economic disturbances doubtless turned the thoughts of the hungry and harassed to the land of plenty across the sea. But a potent cause of the great migration of the thirties and forties was the universal social and political discontent which followed in the wake of the Napoleonic wars. The German people were still divided into numberless small feudalities whose petty dukes and princes clung tenaciously to their medieval prerogatives and tyrannies. The contest against Napoleon had been waged by German patriots not only to overcome a foreign foe but to break the tyrant at home. The hope for constitutional government, for a representative system and a liberal legislation in the German States rose mightily after Waterloo. But the promises of princes made in days of stress were soon forgotten, and the Congress of Vienna had established the semblance of a German federation upon a unity of reactionary rulers, not upon a constitutional, representative basis.

The reaction against this bitter disappointment was led by the eager German youth, who, inspired

by liberal ideals, now thirsted for freedom of thought, of speech, and of action. Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, a German patriot, organized everywhere *Turnvereine*, or gymnastic clubs, as a tangible form of expressing this demand. Among the students of the universities liberal patriotic clubs called *Burschenschaften* were organized, idealistic in their aims and impractical in their propaganda, where "every man with his bonnet on his head, a pot of beer in his hand, a pipe or seegar in his mouth, and a song upon his lips, never doubting but that he and his companions are training themselves to be the regenerators of Europe," vowed "the liberation of Germany." Alas for the enthusiasms of youth! In 1817 the *Burschenschaften* held a mass reunion at the Wartburg. Their boyish antics were greatly exaggerated in the conservative papers and the governments increased their vigilance. In 1819 Kotzebue, a reactionary publicist, was assassinated by a member of the Jena *Burschenschaft*, and the retaliation of the government was prompt and thoroughly Prussian — gagging of the press and of speech, dissolution of all liberal organizations, espionage, the hounding of all suspects. There seemed to remain only flight to liberal democratic America. But the suppression of the clubs did not entirely put out the

fires of constitutional desires. These smoldered until the storms of '48 fanned them into a fitful blaze. For a brief hour the German Democrat had the feudal lords cowed. Frederick William, the "romantic" Hohenzollern, promised a constitution to the threatening mob in Berlin; the King of Saxony and the Grand Duke of Bavaria fled their capitals; revolts occurred in Silesia, Posen, Hesse-Cassel, and Nassau. Then struck the first great hour of modern Prussia, as, with her heartless and disciplined soldiery, she restored one by one the frightened dukes and princes to their prerogatives and repressed relentlessly and with Junker rigor every liberal concession that had crept into laws and institutions. Strangled liberalism could no longer breathe in Germany, and thousands of her revolutionists fled to America, bringing with them almost the last vestige of German democratic leadership.

In the meantime, economic conditions in Germany remained unsatisfactory and combined with political discontent to uproot a population and transplant it to a new land. The desire to immigrate, stimulated by the transportation companies, spread like a fever. Whole villages sold out and, with their pastor or their physician at their head, shipped for America. A British observer who

visited the Rhine country in 1846 commented on "the long files of carts that meet you every mile, carrying the whole property of these poor wretches who are about to cross the Atlantic on the faith of a lying prospectus." But these people were neither "poor wretches" nor dupes. They had coin in their pockets, and in their heads a more or less accurate knowledge of the land of their desires. At this time the German bookshops were teeming with little volumes giving, in the methodical Teutonic fashion, conservative advice to prospective immigrants and rather accurate descriptions of America, with statistical information and abstracts of American laws. Many of the immigrants had further detailed information from relatives and friends already prospering on western farms or in rapidly growing towns. This was, therefore, far from a pauper invasion. It included every class, even broken-down members of the nobility. The majority were, naturally, peasants and artisans, but there were multitudes of small merchants and farmers. And the political refugees included many men of substantial property and of notable intellectual attainments.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. G. Häcker, a well-informed and prosperous German who took the journey by steerage in a sailing vessel in 1849, wrote an instructive description of his experiences. Of his fellow passengers

Bremen was the favorite port of departure for these German emigrants to America. Havre, Hamburg, and Antwerp were popular, and even London. During the great rush every ship was overcrowded and none was over sanitary. Steerage passengers were promiscuously crowded together and furnished their own food; and the ship's crew, the captain, the agents who negotiated the voyage, and the sharks who awaited their arrival in America, all had a share in preying upon the inexperience of the immigrants. Arrived in America, these Germans were not content to settle, like dregs, in the cities on the seacoast. They were land lovers, and westward they started at once, usually in companies, sometimes as whole communities, by way of the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes, and later by the new railway lines, into Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Wisconsin, and Iowa, where their instinct for the soil taught them to select the most fertile spots. Soon their log cabins and their ample barns and flourishing stock bespoke their success.

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he said: "Our company was very mixed. There were many young people: clerks, artists, musicians, architects, miners, mechanics, men of various professions, peasants, one man seventy-eight years old, another very aged Bavarian farmer, several families of Jews, etc., and a fair collection of children."

The growing Western cities called to the skilled artisan, the small tradesman, and the intellectuals. Cincinnati early became a German center. In 1830 the Germans numbered five per cent of its population; in 1840, twenty-three per cent; and in 1869, thirty-four per cent. Milwaukee, "the German Athens," as it was once called, became the distributing point of German immigration and influence in the Northwest. Its *Gesangvereine* and *Turnvereine* became as famous as its lager beer, and German was heard more frequently than English upon its streets. St. Louis was the center of a German influence that extended throughout the Missouri Valley. Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, Buffalo, and many of the minor towns in the Middle West received substantial additions from this migration.

Unlike the Irish, the Germans brought with them a strange language, and this proved a strong bond in that German solidarity which maintained itself in spite of the influence of their new environment. In the glow of their first enthusiasm many of the intellectuals believed they could establish a German state in America. "The foundations of a new and free Germany in the great North American Republic shall be laid by us," wrote Follenius, the dreamer, who desired to land



enough Germans in "one of the American territories to establish an essentially German state." In 1833 the Giessener Gesellschaft, a company organized in the Grand Duchy of Hesse, grew out of this suggestion and chose Arkansas as the site for its colony. But unfavorable reports turned the immigrants to Missouri, where settlements were made. These, however, never grew into a German state but merged quite contentedly into the prosperous American population.

A second attempt, also from Hesse, had a tragic dénouement. A number of German nobles formed a company called the Mainzer Adelsverein and in 1842 sent two of their colleagues to Texas to seek out a site. The place chosen was ill-suited for a colony, however, and the whole enterprise from beginning to end was characterized by princely incompetence. Thousands of immigrants, lured by the company's liberal offers and glowing prospectus, soon found themselves in dire want; many perished of disease and hunger; and the company ended in ignominious disaster. The surviving colonists in Texas, however, when they realized that they must depend upon their own efforts, succeeded in finding work and eventually in establishing several flourishing communities.

Finally, Wisconsin and Illinois were considered as possible sites for a Germany in America. But this ambition never assumed a concrete form. Everywhere the Americans, with their energy and organizing capacity, had preceded the incoming Germans and retained the political sovereignty of the American state.

But while they did not establish a German state, these immigrants did cling to their customs wherever they settled in considerable numbers. Especially did they retain their original social life, their *Turnvereine*, their musical clubs, their sociable beer gardens, their picnics and excursions, their churches and parochial schools. They still celebrated their Christmas and other church festivals with German cookery and *Kuchen*, and their weddings and christenings were enlivened but rarely debauched with generous libations of lager beer and wine. In the Middle West were whole regions where German was the familiar language for two generations.

There were three strata to this second German migration. The earlier courses were largely peasants and skilled artisans, those of the decade of the Civil War were mostly of the working classes, and between these came the "Forty-eighters." Upon

them all, however, peasant, artisan, merchant, and intellectual, their experiences in their native land had made a deep impression. They all had a background of political philosophy the nucleus of which was individual liberty; they all had a violent distaste for the petty tyrannies and espionages which contact with their own form of government had produced; and in coming to America they all sought, besides farms and jobs, political freedom. They therefore came in humility, bore in patience the disappointments of the first rough contacts with pioneer America and its nativism, and few, if any, cherished the hope of going back to Germany. Though some of the intellectual idealists at first had indefinite enthusiasms about a *Deutschtum* in America, these visions soon vanished. They expressed no love for the governments they had left, however strong the cords of sentiment bound them to the domestic and institutional customs of their childhood.

This was to a considerable degree an idealistic migration and as such it had a lasting influence upon American life. The industry of these people and their thrift, even to paring economy, have often been extolled; but other nationalities have worked as hard and as successfully and have spent

as sparingly. The special contribution to America which these Germans made lay in other qualities. Their artists and musicians and actors planted the first seeds of æsthetic appreciation in the raw West where the repertoire had previously been limited to *Money Musk*, *The Arkansas Traveler*, and *Old Dog Tray*. The liberal tendencies of German thought mellowed the austere Puritanism of the prevalent theology. The respect which these people had for intellectual attainments potently influenced the educational system of America from the kindergarten to the newly founded state universities. Their political convictions led them to espouse with ardor the cause of the Union in the war upon slavery; and their sturdy independence in partisan politics was no small factor in bringing about civil service reform. They established German newspapers by the hundreds and maintained many German schools and German colleges. They freely indulged their love for German customs. But while their sentimentalism was German, their realism was American. They considered it an honor to become American citizens. Their leaders became American leaders. Carl Schurz was not an isolated example. He was associated with a host of able, careful, constructive Germans.

The greatest quarrels of these German immigrants with American ways were over the so-called "Continental Sabbath" and the right to drink beer when and where they pleased. "Only when his beer is in danger," wrote one of the leading Forty-eighters, "does the German-American rouse himself and become a berserker." The great numbers of these men in many cities and in some of the Western States enabled them to have German taught in the public schools, though it is only fair to say that the underlying motive was liberalism rather than Prussian provincialism. Frederick Kapp, a distinguished interpreter of the spirit of these Forty-eighters, expressed their conviction when he said that those who cared to remain German should remain in Germany and that those who came to America were under solemn obligations to become Americans.

The descendants of these immigrants, the second and the third and fourth generations, are now thoroughly absorbed into every phase of American life. Their national idiosyncrasies have been modified and subdued by the gentle but relentless persistence of the English language and the robust vigor of American law and American political institutions.

After 1870 a great change came over the German immigration. More and more industrial workers, but fewer and fewer peasants, and very rarely an intellectual or a man of substance, now appeared at Ellis Island for admission to the United States.<sup>1</sup> The facilities for migrating were vastly increased by the great transatlantic steamship companies. The new Germans came in hordes even outnumbering the migrations of the fifties. From 1870 to 1910 over three and a quarter millions arrived. The highest point of the wave, however, was reached in 1882, when 250,630 German immigrants entered the United States. Thereafter the number rapidly subsided; the lowest ebb, in 1898, brought only 17,111, but from that time until the Great War the number of annual arrivals fluctuated between 25,000 and 40,000.

The majority of those who came in the earlier part of this period made their way to the Western lands. The Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa,

<sup>1</sup> There were three potent reasons for this migration: financial stringency, overpopulation, and the growing rigor of the military service. Over ten thousand processes a year were issued by the German Government in 1872 and 1873 for evasion of military duty. Germans who had become naturalized American citizens were arrested when they returned to the Fatherland for a visit on the charge of having evaded military service. A treaty between the two countries finally adjusted this difficulty.

and the Far West, still offered alluring opportunities. But as these lands were gradually taken, the later influx turned towards the cities. Here the immigrants not only found employment in those trades and occupations which the Germans for years had virtually monopolized, but they also became factory workers in great numbers, and many of them went into the mining regions.

It soon became apparent that the spirit of this latest migration was very different from that of the earlier ones. "I do not believe," writes a well-informed and patriotic Lutheran pastor in 1917, "that there is one among a thousand that has emigrated on account of dissatisfaction with the German Government during the last forty-five years." Humility on the part of these newcomers now gradually gave way to arrogance. Instead of appearing eager to embrace their new opportunities, they criticized everything they found in their new home. The contemptuous hauteur and provincial egotism of the modern Prussian, loathsome enough in the educated, were ridiculous in the poor immigrants. Gradually this Prussian spirit increased. In 1883 it could still be said of the three hundred German-American periodicals, daily, weekly, and monthly, that in their tone they were thoroughly American.



But ten or fifteen years later changes were apparent. In 1895 there were some five hundred German periodicals published in America, and many of the newer ones were rabidly Germanophile. The editors and owners of the older publications were dying out, and new hands were guiding the editorial pens. Often when there was no American-born German available, an editor was imported fresh from Germany. He came as a German from a new Germany—that Prussianized Germany which unmasked itself in August, 1914, and which included in its dream of power the unswerving and undivided loyalty of all Germans who had migrated. The traditional American indifference and good nature became a shield for the Machiavellian editors who now began to write not for the benefit of America but for the benefit of Germany. Political scandals, odious comparisons of American and German methods, and adroit criticisms of American ways were the daily pabulum fed to the German reader, who was left with the impression that everything in the United States was wrong, while everything in Germany was right. Before the United States entered the Great War, there was a most remarkable unanimity of expression among these German publications;

afterwards, Congress found it necessary to enact rigorous laws against them. As a result, many of them were suppressed, and many others suspended publication.

German pastors, also, were not infrequently imported and brought with them the virus of the new Prussianism. This they injected into their congregations and especially into the children who attended their catechetical instruction. German "exchange professors," in addition to their university duties, usually made a pilgrimage of the cities where the German influence was strong. The fostering of the German language became no longer merely a means of culture or an appurtenance to business but was insisted upon as a necessity to keep alive the German spirit, *der Deutsche Geist*. German parents were warned, over and over again, that once their children lost their language they would soon lose every active interest in *Kultur*. The teaching of German in the colleges and universities assumed, undisguised and unashamed, the character of Prussian propaganda. The new immigrants from Germany were carefully protected from the deteriorating effect of American contacts, and, unlike the preceding generations of German immigrants, they took very little part in politics.

Those who arrived after 1900 refused, usually, to become naturalized.

The diabolical ingenuity of the German propaganda was subsequently laid bare, and it is known today that nearly every German club, church, school, and newspaper from about 1895 onward was being secretly marshaled into a powerful Teutonic homogeneity of sentiment and public opinion. The Kaiser boasted of his political influence through the German vote. The German-American League, incorporated by Congress, had its branches in many States. Millions of dollars were spent by the Imperial German Government to corrupt the millions of German birth in America. These disclosures, when they were ultimately made, produced in the United States a sharp and profound reaction against everything Teutonic. The former indifference completely vanished and hyphen-hunting became a popular pastime. The charter of the German-American League was revoked by Congress. City after city took German from its school curriculum. Teutonic names of towns and streets were erased — half a dozen Berlins vanished overnight — and in their places appeared the names of French, British, and American heroes.

But though the names might be erased, the

German element remained. It had become incorporated into the national bone and sinew, contributing its thoroughness, stolidity, and solidity to the American stock. The power of liberal political institutions in America has been revealed, and thousands upon thousands of the sons and grandsons of German immigrants crossed the seas in 1917 and 1918 to bear aloft the starry standard upon the fields of Flanders against the arrogance and brutality of the neo-Prussians.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CALL OF THE LAND

FOR over a century after the Revolution the great fact in American life was the unoccupied land, that vast stretch of expectant acreage lying fallow in the West. It kept the American buoyant, for it was an insurance policy against want. When his crops failed or his business grew dull, there was the West. When panic and disaster overtook him, there remained the West. When the family grew too large for the old homestead, the sons went west. And land, unlimited and virtually free, was the magnet that drew the foreign home seeker to the American shores.

The first public domain after the formation of the Union extended from the Alleghanies to the Mississippi. This area was enlarged and pushed to the Rockies by the Louisiana Purchase (1803) and was again enlarged and extended to the Pacific by the acquisition of Oregon (1846) and the Mexican

cession (1848). The total area of the United States from coast to coast then comprised 3,025,000<sup>1</sup> square miles, of which over two-thirds were at one time or another public domain. Before the close of the Civil War the Government had disposed of nearly four hundred million acres but still retained in its possession an area three times as great as the whole of the territory which had been won from Great Britain in the Revolution.

The public domain was at first looked upon as a source of revenue, and a minimum price was fixed by law at \$2 an acre, though this rate was subsequently (1820) lowered to \$1.25 an acre. The West always wanted liberal land laws, but the South before the Civil War, fearing that the growth of the West would give the North superior strength, opposed any such generosity. When the North dominated Congress, the Homestead Law of 1862 provided that any person, twenty-one years of age, who was a citizen of the United States or who had declared his intention of becoming one, could obtain title to 160 acres of land by living upon it five years, making certain improvements, and paying the entry fee of ten dollars.

<sup>1</sup> Oberholtzer, *History of the United States since the Civil War*, vol. I, p. 275.

The Government laid out its vast estate in townships six miles square, which it subdivided into sections of 640 acres and quarter sections of 160 acres. The quarter section was regarded as the public land unit and was the largest amount permitted for individual preëmption and later for a homestead. Thus was the whole world invited to go west. Under the new law, 1,160,000 acres were taken up in 1865.<sup>1</sup> The settler no longer had to suffer the wearisome, heart-breaking tasks that confronted the pioneer of earlier years, for the railway and steamboat had for some time taken the place of the Conestoga wagon and the fitful sailboat.

But the movement by railway and by steamboat was merely a continuation on a greater scale of what had been going on ever since the Revolution. The westward movement was begun, as we have seen, not by foreigners but by American farmers and settlers from seaboard and back country, thousands of whom, before the dawn of the nineteenth century, packed their household goods and families into covered wagons and followed the sunset trail.

The vanguard of this westward march was American, but foreign immigrants soon began to mingle

<sup>1</sup> Oberholtzer, *supra cit.*, p. 278.



with the caravans. At first these newcomers who heard the far call of the West were nearly all from the British Isles. Indeed so great was the exodus of these farmers that in 1816 the British journals in alarm asked Parliament to check the "ruinous drain of the most useful part of the population of the United Kingdom." Public meetings were held in Great Britain to discuss the average man's prospect in the new country. Agents of land companies found eager crowds gathered to learn particulars. Whole neighborhoods departed for America. In order to stop the exodus, the newspapers dwelt upon the hardship of the voyage and the excesses of the Americans. But, until Australia, New Zealand, and Canada began to deflect migration, the stream to the United States from England, Scotland, and Wales was constant and copious. Between 1820 and 1910 the number coming from Ireland was 4,212,169, from England 2,212,071, from Scotland 488,749, and from Wales 59,540.

What proportion of this host found their way to the farms is not known.<sup>1</sup> In the earlier years, the

<sup>1</sup> The census of 1910 discloses the fact that of the 6,361,502 farms in the United States 75 per cent were operated by native white Americans and only 10.5 per cent by foreign born whites. The foreign born were distributed as follows: Austria, 33,336; Hungary, 3827; England, 39,728; Ireland, 33,480; Scotland,

majority of the English and Scotch sought the land. In western New York, in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, and contiguous States there were many Scotch and English neighborhoods established before the Civil War. Since 1870, however, the incoming British have provided large numbers of skilled mechanics and miners, and the Welsh, also, have been drawn largely to the coal mines.

The French Revolution drove many notables to exile in the United States, and several attempts were made at colonization. The names Gallipolis and Gallia County, Ohio, bear witness to their French origin. Gallipolis was settled in 1790 by adventurers from Havre, Bordeaux, Nantes, La Rochelle, and other French cities. The colony was promoted in France by Joel Barlow, an Ananias even among land sharks, representing the Scioto Land Company, or *Companie du Scioto*, one of the numerous speculative concerns that early sought to capitalize credulity and European ignorance of the West. The Company had, in fact, no title to the lands, and the wretched colonists found themselves

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10,220; Wales, 4110; France, 5832; Germany, 221,800; Holland, 13,790; Italy, 10,614; Russia, 25,788; Poland, 7228; Denmark, 28,375; Norway, 59,742; Sweden, 67,453; Switzerland, 14,333; Canada, 61,878.

stranded in a wilderness for whose conquest they were unsuited. Of the colonists McMaster says: "Some could build coaches, some could make perukes, some could carve, others could gild with such exquisite carving that their work had been thought not unworthy of the King."<sup>1</sup> Congress came to the relief of these unfortunate people in 1795 and granted them twenty-four thousand acres in Ohio. The town they founded never fully realized their early dreams, but, after a bitter struggle, it survived the log cabin days and was later honored by a visit from Louis Philippe and from Lafayette. Very few descendants of the French colonists share in its present-day prosperity.

The majority of the French who came to America after 1820 were factory workers and professional people who remained in the cities. There are great numbers of French Canadians in the factory towns of New England. There are, too, French colonies in America whose inhabitants cannot be rated as foreigners, for their ancestors were veritable pioneers. Throughout the Mississippi Valley, such French settlements as Kaskaskia, Prairie du Rocher, Cahokia, and others have left much more than a geographical designation and

<sup>1</sup> *History of the People of the United States*, vol. VII, p. 203.

have preserved an old world aroma of quaintness and contentment.

Swiss immigrants, to the number of about 250,000 and over 175,000 Dutch have found homes in America. The majority of the Swiss came from the German cantons of Switzerland. They have large settlements in Ohio, Wisconsin, and California, where they are very successful in dairying and stock raising. The Hollanders have taken root chiefly in western Michigan, between the Kalamazoo and Grand rivers, on the deep black bottom lands suitable for celery and market gardening. The town of Holland there, with its college and churches, is the center of Dutch influence in the United States. Six of the eleven Dutch periodicals printed in America are issued from Michigan, and the majority of newcomers (over 80,000 have arrived since 1900) have made their way to that State. These sturdy and industrious people from Holland and Switzerland readily adapt themselves to American life.

No people have answered the call of the land in recent years as eagerly as have the Scandinavians. These modern vikings have within one generation peopled a large part of the great American Northwest. In 1850 there were only eighteen thousand

Scandinavians in the United States. The tide rose rapidly in the sixties and reached its height in the eighties, until over two million Scandinavian immigrants have made America their home. They and their descendants form a very substantial part of the rural population. There are nearly half as many Norwegians in America as in Norway, which has emptied a larger proportion of its population into the American lap than any other country save Ireland. About one-fourth of the world's Swedes and over one-tenth of the world's Danes dwell in America.

The term Scandinavian is here used in the loose sense to embrace the peoples of the two peninsulas where dwell the Danes, the Norwegians, and the Swedes. These three branches of the same family have much in common, though for many years they objected to being thus rudely shaken together into one ethnic measure. The Swede is the aristocrat, the Norwegian the democrat, the Dane the conservative. The Swede, polite, vivacious, fond of music and literature, is "the Frenchman of the North," the Norwegian is a serious viking in modern dress; the Dane remains a landsman, devoted to his fields, and he is more amenable than his northern kinsmen to the cultural influence of the South.

The Norwegian, true to viking traditions, led the modern exodus. In 1825 the sloop *Restoration*, the *Mayflower* of the Norse, landed a band of fifty-three Norwegian Quakers on Manhattan. These peasants settled at first in western New York. But within a few years most of them removed to Fox River, Illinois, whither were drawn most of the Norwegians who migrated before 1850. After the Civil War, the stream rapidly rose, until nearly seven hundred thousand persons of Norwegian birth have settled in America.

The Swedish migration started in 1841, when Gustavus Unonius, a former student of the University of Upsala, founded the colony of Pine Lake, near Milwaukee. His followers have been described as a strange assortment of "noblemen, ex-army officers, merchants, and adventurers," whose experiences and talents were not of the sort that make pioneering successful. Frederika Bremer, the noted Swedish traveler, has left a description of the little cluster of log huts and the handful of people who "had taken with them the Swedish inclination for hospitality and a merry life, without sufficiently considering how long it could last." Their experiences form a romantic prelude to the great Swedish migration, which reached its height in the

eighties. Today the Swedes form the largest element in the Scandinavian influx, for well over one million have migrated to the United States.

Nearly three hundred thousand persons of Danish blood have come into the country since the Civil War. A large number migrated from Schleswig-Holstein, after the forcible annexation of that province by Prussia in 1866, preferring the freedom of America to the tyranny of Berlin.

Whatever distinctions in language and customs may have characterized these Northern peoples, they had one ambition in common — the desire to own tillable land. So they made of the Northwest a new Scandinavia, larger and far more prosperous than that which Gustavus Adolphus had planned in colonial days for his colony in Delaware. One can travel today three hundred miles at a stretch across the prairies of the Dakotas or the fields of Minnesota without leaving land that is owned by Scandinavians. They abound also in Wisconsin, Northern Illinois, Eastern Nebraska, and Kansas, and Northern Michigan. Latterly the lands of Oregon and Washington are luring them by the thousands, while throughout the remaining West there are scattered many prosperous farms cultivated by representatives of this hardy race. Latterly this



stream of Scandinavians has thinned to about one-half its former size. In 1910, 48,000 came; in 1911, 42,000; in 1912, 27,000; in 1913, 33,000. The later immigrant is absorbed by the cities, or sails upon the Great Lakes or in the coastwise trade, or works in lumber camps or mines. Wherever you find a Scandinavian, however, he is working close to nature, even though he is responding to the call of the new industry.

It is the consensus of opinion among competent observers that these northern peoples have been the most useful of the recent great additions to the American race. They were particularly fitted by nature for the conquest of the great area which they have brought under subjugation, not merely because of their indomitable industry, perseverance, honesty, and aptitude for agriculture, but because they share with the Englishman and the Scotchman the instinct for self-government. Above all, the Scandinavian has never looked upon himself as an exile. From the first he has considered himself an American. In Minnesota and Dakota, the Norse pioneer often preceded local government. "Whenever a township became populous enough to have a name as well as a number on the surveyor's map, that question was likely to be determined by

the people on the ground, and such names as Christiana, Swede Plain, Numedal, Throndhjem, and Vasa leave no doubt that Scandinavians officiated at the christening." These people proceeded with the organizing of the local government and, "except for the peculiar names, no one would suspect that the town-makers were born elsewhere than in Massachusetts or New York."<sup>1</sup> This, too, in spite of the fact that they continued the use of their mother tongue, for not infrequently election notices and even civic ordinances and orders were issued in Norwegian or Swedish. In 1893 there were 146 Scandinavian newspapers, and their number has since greatly increased.

In politics the Norseman learned his lesson quickly. Governors, senators, and representatives in Congress give evidence to a racial clannishness that has more than once proven stronger than party allegiance. Yet with all their influence in the Northwest, they have not insisted on unreasonable race recognition, as have the Germans in Wisconsin and other localities. Minnesota and Dakota have established classes in "the Scandinavian language" in their state universities,

<sup>1</sup> K. C. Babcock, *The Scandinavian Element in the United States*, p. 143.

evidently leaving it to be decided as an academic question which is *the* Scandinavian language. Without brilliance, producing few leaders, the Norseman represents the rugged commonplace of American life, avoiding the catastrophes of a soaring ambition on the one hand and the pitfalls of a jaded temperamentalism on the other. Bent on self-improvement, he scrupulously patronizes farmers' institutes, high schools, and extension courses, and listens with intelligent patience to lectures that would put an American audience to sleep. This son of the North has greatly buttressed every worthy American institution with the stern traditional virtues of the tiller of the soil. Strength he gives, if not grace, and that at a time when all social institutions are being shaken to their foundations.

Among the early homesteaders in the upper Mississippi Valley there were a substantial number of Bohemians. In Nebraska they comprise nine per cent of the foreign born population, in Oklahoma seven per cent, and in Texas over six per cent. They began migrating in the turbulent forties. They were nearly all of the peasant class, neat, industrious and intelligent, and they usually settled in colonies where they retained their native tongue

and customs. They were opposed to slavery and many enlisted in the Union cause.

Among the Polish immigrants who came to America before 1870, many settled on farms in Illinois, Wisconsin, Texas, and other States. They proved much more clannish than the Bohemians and more reluctant to conform to American customs.

Many farms in the Northwest are occupied by Finns, of whom there were in 1910 over two hundred thousand in the United States. They are a Tatar race, with a copious sprinkling of Swedish blood. Illiteracy is rare among them. They are eager patrons of night schools and libraries and have a flourishing college near Duluth. They are eager for citizenship and are independent in politics. The glittering generalities of Marxian socialism seem peculiarly alluring to them; and not a few have joined the I. W. W. Drink has been their curse, but a strong temperance movement has recently made rapid headway among them. They are natural woodmen and wield the axe with the skill of our own frontiersmen. Their peculiar houses, made of neatly squared logs, are features of every Finnish settlement. All of the North European races and a few from Southern and Eastern Europe have contributed to the American rural

population; yet the Census of 1910 disclosed the fact that of the 6,361,502 white farm operators in the United States, 75 per cent were native American and only 10.5 per cent were foreign born.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CITY BUILDERS

“WHAT will happen to immigration when the public domain has vanished?” was a question frequently asked by thoughtful American citizens. The question has been answered: the immigrant has become a job seeker in the city instead of a home seeker in the open country. The last three decades have witnessed “the portentous growth of the cities” — and they are cities of a new type, cities of gigantic factories, towering skyscrapers, electric trolleys, telephones, automobiles, and motor trucks, and of fetid tenements swarming with immigrants. The immigrants, too, are of a new type. When Henry James revisited Boston after a long absence, he was shocked at the “gross little foreigners” who infested its streets, and he said it seemed as if the fine old city had been wiped with “a sponge saturated with the foreign mixture and passed over

almost everything I remembered and might have still recovered.”<sup>1</sup>

Until 1882 the bulk of immigration, as we have seen, came from the north of Europe, and these immigrants were kinsmen to the American and for the most part sought the country. The new immigration, however, which chiefly sought the cities, hailed from southern and eastern Europe. It has shown itself alien in language, custom, in ethnic affinities and political concepts, in personal standards and assimilative ambitions. These immigrants arrived usually in masculine hordes, leaving women and children behind, clinging to their own kind with an apprehensive mistrust of all things American, and filled with the desire to extract from this fabulous mine as much gold as possible and then to return to their native villages. Yet a very large number of those who have gone home to Europe have returned to America with bride or family. As a result the larger cities of the United States are congeries of foreign quarters, whose alarming fecundity fills the streets with progeny and whose polyglot chatter on pay night turns even many a demure New England town into a veritable babel.

<sup>1</sup> This lament of Henry James's is cited by E. A. Ross in *The Old World in the New*, p. 101.



There are in the United States today roughly eight or ten millions of these new immigrants. A line drawn southward from Minneapolis to St. Louis and thence eastward to Washington would embrace over four-fifths of them, for most of the great American cities lie in this northeastern corner of the land. Whence come these millions? From the vast and mysterious lands of the Slavs, from Italy, from Greece, and from the Levant.

The term Slav covers a welter of nationalities whose common ethnic heritage has long been concealed under religious, geographical, and political diversities and feuds. They may be divided into North Slavs, including Bohemians, Poles, Ruthenians, Slovaks, and "Russians," and South Slavs, including Bulgarians, Serbians and Montenegrins, Croatians, Slovenians, and Dalmatians. As one writer on these races says, "It is often impossible in America to distinguish these national groups. . . . Yet the differences are there. . . . In American communities they have their different churches, societies, newspapers, and a separate social life. . . . The Pole wastes no love on the Russian, nor the Ruthenian on the Pole, and a person who acts in ignorance of these facts, a missionary for instance, or a political boss, or a trade union organizer, may

find himself in the position of a host who should innocently invite a Fenian from Cork County to hobnob with an Ulster Orangeman on the ground that both were Irish.”<sup>1</sup>

The Bohemians (including the Moravians) are the most venturesome and the most enlightened of the great Slav family. Many of them came to America in the seventeenth century as religious pilgrims; more came as political refugees after 1848; and since 1870, they have come in larger numbers, seeking better economic conditions. All told, they numbered over 220,000, from which it may be estimated that there are probably today half a million persons of Bohemian parentage in the United States. Chicago alone shelters over 100,000 of these people, and Cleveland 45,000. These immigrants as a rule own the neat, box-like houses in which they live, where flower-pots and tiny gardens bespeak a love of growing things, and lace curtains, carpets, and center tables testify to the influence of an American environment. The Bohemians are much given to clubs, lodges, and societies, which usually have rooms over Bohemian saloons. The second generation is prone to free thinking and has a weakness for radical socialism.

<sup>1</sup> Emily Greene Balch, *Our Slavic Fellow Citizens*, p. 8-9.

The Bohemians are assiduous readers, and illiteracy is almost unknown among them. They support many periodicals and several thriving publishing houses. They cling to their language with a religious fervor. Their literature and the history which it preserves is their pride. Yet this love of their own traditions is no barrier, apparently, to forming strong attachments to American institutions. The Bohemians are active in politics, and in the cities where they congregate they see that they have their share of the public offices. There are more highly skilled workmen among them than are to be found in any other Slavic group; and the second generation of Bohemians in America has produced many brilliant professional men and successful business men. As one writer puts it: "The miracle which America works upon the Bohemians is more remarkable than any other of our national achievements. The downcast look so characteristic of them in Prague is nearly gone, the surliness and unfriendliness disappear, and the young Bohemian of the second or third generation is as frank and open as his neighbor with his Anglo-Saxon heritage."<sup>1</sup>

The bitter political and racial suppression that

<sup>1</sup> Edward A. Steiner, *On the Trail of the Immigrant*, p. 228.

made the Bohemian surly and defiant seem, on the other hand, to have left the Polish peasant stolid, patient, and very illiterate. Polish settlements were made in Texas and Wisconsin in the fifties and before 1880 a large number of Poles were scattered through New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois. Since then great numbers have come over in the new migrations until today, it is estimated, at least three million persons of Polish parentage live in the United States.<sup>1</sup> The men in the earlier migrations frequently settled on the land; the recent comers hasten to the mines and the metal working centers, where their strong though untrained hands are in constant demand.

The majority of the Poles have come to America to stay. They remain, however, very clannish and according to the Federal Industrial Commission, without the "desire to fuse socially." The recent Polish immigrant is very circumscribed in his mental horizon, clings tenaciously to his language, which he hears exclusively in his home and his

<sup>1</sup> This is an estimate made by the Reverend W. X. Kruszkowski of Ripon, Wisconsin, as reported by E. G. Balch in *Our Slavic Fellow Citizens*, p. 262. Of this large number, Chicago claims 350,000; New York City, 250,000; Buffalo, 80,000; Milwaukee, 75,000; Detroit, 75,000; while at least a dozen other cities have substantial Polish settlements. These numbers include the suburbs of each city.

church, his lodge, and his saloon, and is unresponsive to his American environment. Not until the second and third generation is reached does the spirit of American democracy make headway against his lethal stolidity. Now that Poland has been made free as a result of the Great War, it may be that the Pole's inherited indifference will give way to national aspirations and that, in the resurrection of his historic hope of freedom, he will find an animating stimulant.

The Pole, however, is more independent and progressive than the Slovak, his brother from the northeastern corner of Hungary. For many generations this segment of the Slav race has been pitifully crushed. Turks, Magyars, and Huns have taken delight in oppressing him. An early, sporadic migration of Slovaks to America received a sudden impulse in 1882. About 200,000 have come since then, and perhaps twice that number of persons of Slovak blood now dwell in the mining and industrial centers of the United States. Many of them, however, return to their native villages. They keep aloof from things American and only too often prefer to live in squalor and ignorance. Their social life is centered in the church, the saloon, and the lodge. It is asserted that their

numerous organizations have a membership of over 100,000, and that there were almost as many Slovak newspapers in America as in Hungary.<sup>1</sup>

Little Russia, the seat of turmoil, is the home of the Ruthenians, or Ukranians. They are also found in southeastern Galicia, northern Hungary, and in the province of Bukowina. They have migrated from all these provinces and about 350,000, it is estimated, now reside in the United States. They, too, are birds of passage, working in the mines and steel mills for the coveted wages that shall free them from debt at home and insure their independence. Such respite as they take from their labors is spent in the saloon, in the club rooms over the saloon, or in church, where they hear no English speech and learn nothing of American ways.

It is impossible to estimate the total number of Russian Slavs in the United States, as the census figures until recently included as "Russian" all nationalities that came from Russia. They form the smallest of the Slavic groups that have migrated to America. From 1898 to 1909 only 66,282 arrived, about half of whom settled in Pennsylvania and New York. It is surprising to note,

<sup>1</sup> This is accounted for by the fact that the Hungarian Government rigorously censored Slovak publications.

however, that every State in the Union except Utah and every island possession except the Philippines has received a few of these immigrants. The Director of Emigration at St. Petersburg in 1907 characterized these people as "hardy and industrious," and "though illiterate they are intelligent and unbigoted."<sup>1</sup>

So much in brief for the North Slavs. Of the South Slavs, the Bulgarians possess racial characteristics which point to an intermixture in the remote past with some Asiatic strain, perhaps a Magyar blend. Very few Bulgarian immigrants, who come largely from Macedonia, arrived before the revolution of 1904, when many villages in Monastir were destroyed. For some years they made Granite City, near St. Louis, the center of their activities but, like the Serbians, they are now well scattered throughout the country. In Seattle, Butte, Chicago, and Indianapolis they form considerable colonies. Many of them return yearly to their native hills, and it is too early to determine how fully they desire to adapt themselves to American ways.

<sup>1</sup> Since the Russo-Japanese War, Siberia has absorbed great numbers of Russian immigrants. This accounts for the small number that have come to America.



Montenegro, Serbia, and Bulgaria, countries that have been thrust forcibly into the world's vision by the Great War, have sent several hundred thousand of their hardy peasantry to the United States. The Montenegrins and Serbians, who comprise three-fourths of this migration, are virtually one in speech and descent. They are to be found in New England towns and in nearly every State from New York to Alaska, where they work in the mills and mines and in construction gangs. The response which these people make to educational opportunities shows their high cultural possibilities.

The Croats and Dalmatians, who constitute the larger part of the southern Slav immigration, are a sturdy, vigorous people, and splendid specimens of physical manhood. The Dalmatians are a seafaring folk from the Adriatic coast, whose sailors may be found in every port of the world. The Dalmatians have possessed themselves of the oyster fisheries near New Orleans and are to be found in Mississippi making staves and in California making wine. In many cities they manage restaurants. The exceptional shrewdness of the Dalmatians is in bold contrast to their illiteracy. They get on amazingly in spite of their lack of education. Once

they have determined to remain in this country, they take to American ways more readily than do the other southern Slavs.

Croatia, too, has its men of the sea, but in America most of the immigrants of this race are to be found in the mines and coke furnaces of Pennsylvania and West Virginia. In New York City there are some 15,000 Croatian mechanics and longshoremen. The silver and copper mines of Montana also employ a large number of these people. It is estimated that fully one-half of the Croatians return to their native hills and that they contribute yearly many millions to the home-folks.

From the little province of Carniola come the Slovenians, usually known as "Griners" (from the German *Krainer*, the people of the Krain), a fragment of the Slavic race that has become much more assimilated with the Germans who govern them than any other of their kind. Their national costume has all but vanished and with it the virile traditions of their forefathers. They began coming to America in the sixties, and in the seventies they founded an important colony at Joliet, Illinois. Since 1892 their numbers have increased rapidly, until today about 100,000 live in the United States. Over one-half of these immigrants are to be found

in the steel and mining towns of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois, where the large majority of them are unskilled workmen. Among the second generation, however, are to be found a number of successful merchants.

All these numerous peoples have inherited in common the impassive, patient temperament and the unhappy political fate of the Slav. Their countries are mere eddies left by the mighty currents of European conquest and reconquest, backward lands untouched by machine industry and avoided by capital, whose only living links with the moving world are the birds of passage, the immigrants who flit between the mines and cities of America and these isolated European villages. Held together by national costume, song, dance, festival, traditions, and language, these people live in the pale glory of a heroic past. Most of those who come to America are peasants who have been crushed by land feudalism, kept in ignorance by political intolerance, and bound in superstition by a reactionary ecclesiasticism. The brutality with which they treat their women, their disregard for sanitary measures, and their love for strong drink are evidences of the survival of medievalism in the midst of modern life, as are their notions of

class prerogative and their concept of the State. Buffeted by the world, their language suppressed, their nationalism reviled, poor, ignorant, unskilled, these children of the open country come to the ugliest spots of America, the slums of the cities, and the choking atmosphere of the mines. Here, crowded in their colonies, jealously shepherded by their church, neglected by the community, they remain for an entire generation immune to American influences. According to estimates given by Emily G. Balch,<sup>1</sup> between four and six million persons of Slavic descent are now dwelling among us, and their fecundity is amazing. Equally amazing is the indifference of the Government and of Americans generally to the menace involved in the increasing numbers of these inveterate aliens to institutions that are fundamentally American.

The Lithuanians and Magyars are often classed with the Slavs. They hotly resent this inclusion, however, for they are distinct racial strains of ancient lineage. An adverse fate has left the Lithuanian little of his old civilization except his language. Political and economic suppression has made sad havoc of what was once a proud and

<sup>1</sup> *Our Slavic Fellow Citizens*, p. 280.

prosperous people. Most of them are now crowded into the Baltic province that bears their name, and they are reduced to the mental and economic level of the Russian moujik. In 1868 a famine drove the first of these immigrants to America, where they were soon absorbed by the anthracite mines of Pennsylvania. They were joined in the seventies by numbers of army deserters. The hard times of the nineties caused a rush of young men to the western El Dorado. Since then the influx has steadily continued until now over 200,000 are in America. They persistently avoid agriculture and seek the coal mine and the factory. The one craft in which they excel is tailoring, and they proudly boast of being the best dressed among all the Eastern-European immigrants. The one mercantile ambition which they have nourished is to keep a saloon. Drinking is their national vice; and they measure the social success of every wedding, christening, picnic, and jollification by its salvage of empty beer kegs.

Over 338,000 Magyars immigrated to the United States during the decade ending 1910. These brilliant and masterful folk are a Mongoloid blend that swept from the steppes of Asia across eastern Europe a thousand years ago. As the wave

receded, the Magyars remained dominant in beautiful and fertile Hungary, where their aggressive nationalism still brings them into constant rivalry on the one hand with the Germans of Austria and on the other with the Slavs of Hungary. The immigrants to America are largely recruited from the peasantry. They almost invariably seek the cities, where the Magyar neighborhoods can be easily distinguished by their scrupulously neat house-keeping, the flower beds, the little patches of well-swept grass, the clean children, and the robust and tidy women. Among them is less illiteracy than in any other group from eastern and southern Europe, excepting the Finns, who are their ethnic brothers. As a rule they own their own homes. They learn the English language quickly but unfortunately acquire with it many American vices. Drinking and carousing are responsible for their many crimes of personal violence. They are otherwise a sociable, happy people, and the cafés kept by Hungarians are islands of social jollity in the desert of urban strife.

In bold contrast to these ardent devotees of nationalism, the Jew, the man of no country and of all countries, is an American immigrant still to be considered. By force of circumstance he became



a city dweller; he came from the European city; he remained in the American city; and all attempts to colonize Jews on the land have failed. The doors of this country have always been open to him. At the time of the Revolution several thousand Jews dwelt in American towns. By 1850 the number had increased to 50,000 and by the time of the Civil War to 150,000. The persecutions of Czar Alexander III in the eighties swelled the number to over 400,000, and the political reactions of the nineties added over one million. Today at least one-fifth of the ten million Jews in the world live in American cities.

The first to seek a new Zion in this land were the Spanish-Portuguese Jews, who came as early as 1655. They remain a select aristocracy among their race, clinging to certain ritualistic characteristics and retaining much of the pride which their long contact with the Spaniard has engendered. They are found almost exclusively in the eastern cities, as successful bankers, merchants, and professional men. There next came on the wave of the great German immigration the German Jews. They are to be found in every city, large and small, engaged in mercantile pursuits, especially in the drygoods and the clothing business. Nearly all



of the prominent Jews in America have come from this stock — the great bankers, financiers, lawyers, merchants, rabbis, scholars, and public men. It was, indeed, from their broad-minded scholars that there originated the widespread liberal Judaism which has become a potent ethical force in our great cities.

The Austrian and Hungarian Jews followed. The Jews had always received liberal treatment in Hungary, and their mingling with the social Magyars had produced the type of the coffee-house Jew, who loved to reproduce in American cities the conviviality of Vienna and Budapest but who did not take as readily to American ways as the German Jew. Most of the Jews from Hungary remained in New York, although Chicago and St. Louis received a few of them. In commercial life they are traders, pawnbrokers, and peddlers, and control the artificial-flower and passementerie trade.

By far the largest group are the latest comers, the Russian Jews. "Ultra orthodox," says Edward A. Steiner, "yet ultra radical; chained to the past, and yet utterly severed from it; with religion permeating every act of life, or going to the other extreme and having 'none of it'; traders by instinct,

and yet among the hardest manual laborers of our great cities. A complex mass in which great things are yearning to express themselves, a brooding mass which does not know itself and does not lightly disclose itself to the outside.”<sup>1</sup> Nearly a million of these people are crowded into the New York ghettos. Large numbers of them engage in the garment industries and the manufacture of tobacco. They graduate also into junk-dealers, pawnbrokers, and peddlers, and are soon on their way “up town.” Among them socialism thrives, and the second generation displays an unseemly haste to break with the faith of its fathers.

The Jews are the intellectuals of the new immigration. They invest their political ideas with vague generalizations of human amelioration. They cannot forget that Karl Marx was a Jew: and one wonders how many Trotskys and Lenines are being bred in the stagnant air of their reeking ghettos. It remains to be seen whether they will be willing to devote their undoubted mental capacities to other than revolutionary vagaries or to gainful pursuits, for they have a tendency to commercialize everything they touch. They have

<sup>1</sup> *On the Trail of the Immigrant*, p. 27.

shown no reluctance to enter politics; they learn English with amazing rapidity, throng the public schools and colleges, and push with characteristic zeal and persistence into every open door of this liberal land.

From Italy there have come to America well over three million immigrants. For two decades before 1870 they filtered in at the average rate of about one thousand a year; then the current increased to several thousand a year; and after 1880 it rose to a flood.<sup>1</sup> Over two-thirds of these Italians live in the larger cities; one-fourth of them are crowded into New York tenements.<sup>2</sup> Following in order, Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston, New Orleans, Cleveland, St. Louis, Baltimore, Detroit, Portland, and Omaha have their Italian quarters, all characterized by overcrowded boarding houses and tenements, vast hordes of children, here and there an Italian bakery and grocery, on every corner a saloon, and usually a private bank with a

<sup>1</sup> The census figures show that approximately half the Italian immigrants return to their native land. American officers in the Great War were surprised to find so many Italian soldiers who spoke English. In 1910 there remained in the United States only 1,343,000 Italians who were born in Italy, and the total number of persons of Italian stock in the United States was 2,098,000.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Census of 1910 there were 544,000 Italians in New York City.

steamship agency and the office of the local *padrone*. Scores of the lesser cities also have their Italian contingent, usually in the poorest and most neglected part of the town, where gaudily painted door jambs and window frames and wonderfully prosperous gardens proclaim the immigrant from sunny Italy. Not infrequently an old warehouse, store, or church is transformed into an ungainly and evil-odored barracks, housing scores of men who do their own washing and cooking. Those who do not dwell in the cities are at work in construction camps — for the Italian has succeeded the Irishman as the knight of the pick and shovel. The great bulk of these swarthy, singing, hopeful young fellows are peasants, unskilled of hand but willing of heart. Nearly every other one is unable to read or write. They have not come for political or religious reasons but purely as seekers for wages, driven from the peasant villages by overpopulation and the hazards of a precarious agriculture.

They have come in two distinct streams: one from northern Italy, embracing about one-fifth of the whole; the other from southern Italy. The two streams are quite distinct in quality. Northern Italy is the home of the old masters in art and

literature and of a new industrialism that is bringing renewed prosperity to Milan and Turin. Here the virile native stock has been strengthened with the blood of its northern neighbors. They are a capable, creative, conservative, reliable race. On the other hand, the hot temper of the South has been fed by an infusion of Greek and Saracen blood. In Sicily this strain shows at its worst. There the vendetta flourishes; and the Camorra and its sinister analogue, the Black Hand, but too realistically remind us that thousands of these swarthy criminals have found refuge in the dark alleys of our cities. Even in America the Sicilian carries a dirk, and the "death sign" in a court room has silenced many a witness. The north Italians readily identify themselves with American life. Among them are found bakers, barbers, and marble cutters, as well as wholesale fruit and olive oil merchants, artists, and musicians. But the south Italian is a restless, roving creature, who dislikes the confinement and restraint of the mill and factory. He is found out of doors, making roads and excavations, railways, skyscrapers, and houses. If he has a liking for trade he trundles a pushcart filled with fruit or chocolates; or he may turn a jolly hurdy-gurdy or grind scissors. In spite of his

native sociability, the south Italian is very slow to take to American ways. As a rule, he comes here intending to go back when he has made enough money. He has the air of a sojourner. He is picturesque, volatile, and incapable of effective team work.

About 300,000 Greeks have come to America between 1908 and 1917, nearly all of them young men, escaping from a country where they had meat three times a year to a land where they may have it three times a day. "The whole Greek world," says Henry P. Fairchild, writing in 1911, "may be said to be in a fever of emigration. . . . The strong young men with one accord are severing home ties, leaving behind wives and sweethearts, and thronging to the shores of America in search of opportunity and fortune." Every year they send back handsome sums to the expectant family. Business is an instinct with the Greek, and he has almost monopolized the ice cream, confectionery, and retail fruit business, the small florist shops and bootblack stands in scores of towns, and in every large city he is running successful restaurants. As a factory operative he is found in the cotton mills of New England, but he prefers merchandizing to any other calling.

Years ago when New Bedford was still a whaling port a group of Portuguese sailors from the Azores settled there. This formed the nucleus of the Portuguese immigration which, in the last decade, included over 80,000 persons. Two-thirds of these live in New England factory towns, the remaining third, strange to say, have found their way to the other side of the continent, where they work in the gardens and fruit orchards of California. New Bedford is still the center of their activity. They are a hard-working people whose standard of living, according to official investigations "is much lower than that of any other race," of whom scarcely one in twenty become citizens, and who evince no interest in learning or in manual skill.

Finally, American cities are extending the radius of their magnetism and are drawing ambitious tradesmen and workers from the Levant. Over 100,000 have come from Arabia, Syria, Armenia, and Turkey. The Armenians and Syrians, forming the bulk of this influx, came as refugees from the brutalities of the Mohammedan régime. The Levantine is first and always a bargainer. His little bazaars and oriental rug shops are bits of Cairo and Constantinople, where you are privileged to haggle over every purchase in true oriental



style. Even the peddlers of lace and drawn-work find it hard to accustom themselves to the occidental idea of a market price. With all their cunning as traders, they respect learning, prize manual skill, possess a fine artistic sense, and are law-abiding. The Armenians especially are eager to become American citizens. Since the settlement of the Northwestern lands, many thousands of Scandinavians and Finns have flocked to the cities, where they are usually employed as skilled craftsmen.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the United States, in a quarter of a century, has assumed a cosmopolitanism in which the early German and Irish immigrants appear as veteran

<sup>1</sup> The Census of 1910 gives the following distribution of the American white population by percentages:

<i>Location</i>	<i>Native stock</i>	<i>Native born of Foreign or mixed parentage</i>	<i>Foreign born</i>
Rural districts	64.1	13.3	7.5
Cities 2,500- 10,000	57.5	20.6	13.9
" 10,000- 25,000	50.4	24.6	17.4
" 25,000-100,000	45.9	26.5	20.2
" 100,000-500,000	38.9	31.3	22.1
" 500,000 and over	25.6	37.2	33.6

The native white element predominates in the country but is only a fraction of the population in the larger cities.

Americans. This is not a stationary cosmopolitanism, like that of Constantinople, the only great city in Europe that compares with New York, Chicago, or Boston in ethnic complexity. It is a shifting mass. No two generations occupy the same quarters. Even the old rich move "up town" leaving their fine houses, derelicts of a former splendor, to be divided into tenements where six or eight Italian or Polish families find ample room for themselves and a crowd of boarders.

Thousands of these migratory beings throng the steerage of transatlantic ships every winter to return to their European homes. The steamship companies, whose enterprise is largely responsible for this flow of populations, reap their harvest; and many a decaying village buried in the southern hills of Europe, or swept by the winds of the great Slav plains, owes its regeneration ultimately to American dollars.

They pay the price of their success, these flitting beings, links between distant lands and our own. The great maw of mine and factory devours thousands. Their lyric tribal songs are soon drowned by the raucous voices of the city; their ancient folk-dances, meant for a village green, not for a reeking dance-hall, lose here their native grace;

and the quaint and picturesque costumes of the European peasant give place to American store clothes, the ugly badge of equality.

The outward bound throng holds its head high, talks back at the steward, and swaggers. It has become "American." The restless fever of the great democracy is in its veins. Most of those who return home will find their way back with others of their kind to the teeming hives and the coveted fleshpots they are leaving. And again they will tax the ingenuity of labor unions, political and social organizations, schools, libraries, and churches, in the endeavor to transform medieval peasants into democratic peers.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE ORIENTAL

AMERICA, midway between Europe and Asia, was destined to be the meeting-ground of Occident and Orient. It was in the exciting days of '49 that gold became the lodestone to draw to California men from the oriental lands across the Pacific. The Chinese for the moment overcame their religious aversion to leaving their native haunts and, lured by the promise of fabulous wages, made their way to the "gold hills." Of the three hundred thousand who came to America during the three decades of free entry, the large majority were peasants from the rural districts in the vicinity of Canton. They were thrifty, independent, sturdy, honest young men who sought the great adventure unaccompanied by wife or family. Chinese tradition forbade the respectable woman to leave her home, even with her husband; and China was so isolated from the world, so encrusted in her own traditions.

that out of her uncounted millions even the paltry thousands of peasants and workmen who filtered through the port of Canton into the great world were bound by ancient precedent as firmly as if they had remained at home. They invariably planned to return to the Celestial Empire and it was their supreme wish that, if they died abroad, their bodies be buried in the land of their ancestors.

The Chinaman thus came to America as a workman adventurer, not as a prospective citizen. He preserved his queue, his pajamas, his chopsticks, and his joss in the crude and often brutal surroundings of the mining camp. He maintained that gentle, yielding, unassertive character which succumbs quietly to pressure at one point, only to reappear silently and unobtrusively in another place. In the wild rough and tumble of the camp, where the outlaw and the bully found congenial refuge, the celestial did not belie his name. He was indeed of another world, and his capacity for patience, his native dignity without suspicion of hauteur, baffled the loud self-assertion of the Irish and the Anglo-Saxon.

During the first years of the gold rush, the Chinaman was welcome in California because he was necessary. He could do so many things that

the miner disdained or found no time to do. He could cook and wash, and he could serve. He was a rare gardener and a patient day laborer. He could learn a new trade quickly. In the city he became a useful domestic servant at a time when there were very few women. In all his tasks he was neat and had a genius for noiselessly minding his own business.

As the number of miners increased, race prejudice asserted itself. "California for Americans" came to be a slogan that reflected their feelings against Mexicans, Spanish-Americans, and Chinese in the mines. Race riots, often instigated by men who had themselves but recently immigrated to America, were not infrequent. In these disorders the Chinese were no match for the aggressors and in consequence were forced out of many good mining claims.

The labor of the cheap and faithful Chinese appealed to the business instincts of the railroad contractors who were constructing the Pacific railways and they imported large numbers. In 1866 a line of steamships was established to run regularly between Hong Kong and San Francisco. In 1869 the first transcontinental railway was completed and American laborers from the East began to flock to

California, where they immediately found themselves in competition with the Mongolian standard of living. Race rivalry soon flared up and the anti-Chinese sentiment increased as the railroads neared completion and threw more and more of the oriental laborers into the general labor market. Chinese were hustled out of towns. Here and there violence was done. For example, in the Los Angeles riots of October 24, 1871, fifteen Chinamen were hanged and six were shot by the mob.

This prejudice, based primarily upon the Chinaman's willingness to work long hours for little pay and to live in quarters and upon fare which an Anglo-Saxon would find impossible, was greatly increased by his strange garb, language, and customs. The Chinaman remained in every essential a foreigner. In his various societies he maintained to some degree the patriarchal government of his native village. He shunned American courts, avoided the Christian religion, rarely learned much of the English language, and displayed no desire to become naturalized. Instead of sympathy in the country of his sojourn he met discrimination, jealousy, and suspicion. For many years his testimony was not permitted in the courts. His contact with only the rough frontier life failed to reveal to



him the gentle amenities of the white man's faith, and everywhere the upper hand seemed turned against him. So he kept to himself, and this isolation fed the rumors that were constantly poisoning public opinion. Chinatown in the public mind became a synonym for a nightmare of filth, gambling, opium-smoking, and prostitution.

Alarm was spreading among Americans concerning the organizations of the Chinese in the United States. Of these, the Six Companies were the most famous. Mary Roberts Coolidge, after long and careful research, characterized these societies as "the substitute for village and patriarchal association, and although purely voluntary and benevolent in their purpose, they became, because of American ignorance and prejudice, the supposed instruments of tyranny over their countrymen."<sup>1</sup> They each had a club house, where members were registered and where lodgings and other accommodations were provided. The largest in 1877 had a membership of seventy-five thousand; the smallest, forty-three thousand. The Chinese also maintained trade guilds similar in purpose to the American trade union. Private or secret societies also flourished among them, some for good purposes,

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Immigration*, p. 402.

others for illicit purposes. Of the latter the High-binders or Hatchet Men became the most notorious, for they facilitated the importation of Chinese prostitutes. Many of these secret societies thrived on blackmail, and the popular antagonism to the Six Companies was due to the outrages committed by these criminal associations.

When the American labor unions accumulated partisan power, the Chinese became a political issue. This was the greatest evil that could befall them, for now racial persecution received official sanction and passed out of the hands of mere ruffians into the custody of powerful political agitators. Under the lurid leadership of Dennis Kearney, the Workingman's party was organized for the purpose of influencing legislation and "riding the country of Chinese cheap labor." Their goal was "Four dollars a day and roast beef"; and their battle cry, "The Chinese must go." Under the excitement of sand-lot meetings, the Chinese were driven under cover. In the riots of July, 1877, in San Francisco, twenty-five Chinese laundries were burned. "For months afterward," says Mary Roberts Coolidge, "no Chinaman was safe from personal outrage even on the main thoroughfares, and the perpetrators of the abuses were almost

never interfered with so long as they did not molest white men's property."<sup>1</sup>

This anti-Chinese epidemic soon spread to other Western States. Legislatures and city councils vied with each other in passing laws and ordinances to satisfy the demands of the labor vote. All manner of ingenious devices were incorporated into tax laws in an endeavor to drive the Chinese out of certain occupations and to exclude them from the State. License and occupation taxes multiplied. The Chinaman was denied the privilege of citizenship, was excluded from the public schools, and was not allowed to give testimony in proceedings relating to white persons. Manifold ordinances were passed intended to harass and humiliate him: for instance, a San Francisco ordinance required the hair of all prisoners to be cut within three inches of the scalp. Most extreme and unreasonable discriminations against hand laundries were framed. The new California constitution of 1879 endowed the legislature and the cities with large powers in regulating the conditions under which Chinese would be tolerated. In 1880 a state law declared that all corporations operating under a state charter should be prohibited from employing

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Immigration*, p. 265.

Chinese under penalty of forfeiting their charter. Chinese were also excluded from employment in all public works. Nearly all these laws and ordinances, however, were ultimately declared to be unconstitutional on account of their discriminatory character or because they were illegal regulations of commerce.

The States having failed to exclude the Chinese, the only hope left was in the action of the Federal Government. The earliest treaties and trade conventions with China (1844 and 1858) had been silent upon the rights and privileges of Chinese residing or trading in the United States. In 1868, Anson Burlingame, who had served for six years as American Minister to China, but who had now entered the employ of the Chinese Imperial Government, arrived at the head of a Chinese mission sent for the purpose of negotiating a new treaty which should insure reciprocal rights to the Chinese. The journey from San Francisco to Washington was a sort of triumphal progress and everywhere the Chinese mission was received with acclaim. The treaty drawn by Secretary Seward was ratified on July 28, 1868, and was hailed even on the Pacific coast as the beginning of more fortunate relations between the two countries. The treaty acknowledged

the "inherent and inalienable right of man to change his home and allegiance, and also the mutual advantage of the free migration and emigration of their citizens and subjects respectively, from the one country to the other, for purposes of curiosity, of trade or as permanent residents." It stated positively that "citizens of the United States visiting or residing in China shall enjoy the same privileges, immunities, and exemptions in respect to travel and residence as may be enjoyed by the citizens of the most favored nation. And, reciprocally, Chinese subjects visiting or residing in the United States shall enjoy the same privileges, immunities, and exemptions in respect to travel or residence." The right to naturalization was by express statement not conferred by the treaty upon the subjects of either nation dwelling in the territory of the other. But it was not in any way prohibited.

The applause which greeted this international agreement had hardly subsided before the anti-Chinese agitators discovered that the treaty was in their way and they thereupon demanded its modification or abrogation. They now raised the cry that the Chinese were a threat to the morals and health of the country, that the majority of

Chinese immigrants were either coolies under contract, criminals, diseased persons, or prostitutes. As a result, in 1879 a representative from Nevada, one of the States particularly interested, introduced in Congress a bill limiting to fifteen the Chinese passengers that any ship might bring to the United States on a single voyage, and requiring the captains of such vessels to register at the port of entry a list of their Chinese passengers. The Senate added an amendment requesting the President to notify the Chinese Government that the section of the Burlingame treaty insuring reciprocal interchange of citizens was abrogated. After a very brief debate the measure that so flagrantly defied an international treaty passed both houses. It was promptly vetoed, however, by President Hayes on the ground that it violated a treaty which a friendly nation had carefully observed. If the Pacific cities had cause of complaint, the President preferred to remedy the situation by the "proper course of diplomatic negotiations."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> So intense was the feeling in the West that at this time a letter purporting to have been written by James A. Garfield, the Republican candidate, favoring unrestricted immigration, was published on the eve of the Presidential election (1880). Though the letter was shown to be a forgery, yet it was not without influence. In California Garfield received only one of the six electoral votes; and in Nevada he received none. In Denver,

The President accordingly appointed a commission, under the chairmanship of James B. Angell, president of the University of Michigan, to negotiate a new treaty. The commission proceeded to China and completed its task in November, 1880. The new treaty provided that, "whenever, in the opinion of the Government of the United States, the coming of Chinese laborers to the United States, or their residence therein, affects or threatens to affect the interests of that country, or to endanger the good order of the said country or of any locality within the territory thereof, the Government of China agrees that the Government of the United States may regulate, limit, or suspend such coming or residence, but may not absolutely prohibit it." Other Chinese subjects who had come to the United States, "as travelers, merchants, or for curiosity," and laborers already in the United States, were to "be allowed to go and come of their own free will," with all of the "rights, privileges, immunities, and exemptions which are accorded to the citizens of the most favored nation." The United States furthermore undertook

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where only four hundred Chinese lived, race riots occurred which cost one Chinaman his life and destroyed Chinese property to the amount of \$50,000.



to protect the Chinese in the United States against "ill treatment" and to "devise means for their protection."

Two years after the ratification of this treaty, a bill was introduced to prohibit the immigration of Chinese labor for twenty years. Both the great political parties had included the subject in their platforms in 1880. The Democrats had espoused exclusion and were committed to "No more Chinese immigration"; the Republicans had preferred restriction by "just, humane, and reasonable laws." The bill passed, but President Arthur vetoed it on the ground that prohibiting immigration for so long a period transcended the provisions of the treaty. A bill which was then passed shortening the period of the restriction to ten years received the President's signature, and on August 5, 1882, America shut the door in the face of Chinese labor.

The law, however, was very loosely drawn and administrative confusion arose at once. Chinese laborers leaving the United States were required to obtain a certificate from the collector of customs at the port of departure entitling them to reëntry. Other Chinese — merchants, travelers, or visitors — who desired to come to the United States were

required to have a certificate from their Government declaring that they were entitled to enter under the provisions of the treaty. As time went on, identification became a joke, trading in certificates a regular pursuit, and smuggling Chinese across the Canadian border a profitable business. Moreover, in the light of the law, who was a "merchant" and who a "visitor"? In 1884 Congress attempted to remedy these defects of phraseology and administration by carefully framed definitions and stringent measures.<sup>1</sup> The Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of exclusion as incident to American sovereignty.

Meanwhile in the West the popular feeling against the Chinese refused to subside. At Rock Springs, Wyoming, twenty-eight Chinese were killed and fifteen were injured by a mob which also destroyed Chinese property amounting to \$148,000. At Tacoma and Seattle, also, violence descended upon the Mongolian. In San Francisco a special grand jury which investigated the operation of the exclusion laws and a committee of the Board of Supervisors which investigated the condition of Chinatown both made reports that were violently anti-Chinese. A state anti-Chinese convention

<sup>1</sup> *Wong Wing vs. U. S.*, 163 U. S. 235.

soon thereafter declared that the situation "had become well-nigh intolerable." So widespread and venomous was the agitation against Chinese that President Cleveland was impelled to send to Congress two special messages on the question, detailing the facts and requesting Congress to pay the Chinese claims for indemnity which Wyoming refused to honor. The remonstrances of the Chinese Government led to the drafting of a new treaty in 1888. But while China was deliberating over this treaty, Congress summarily shut off any hope for immediate agreement by passing the Scott Act prohibiting the return of any Chinese laborer after the passage of the act, stopping the issue of any more certificates of identification, and declaring void all certificates previously issued. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this brutal political measure was passed with an eye to the Pacific electoral vote in the pending election. In the next presidential year the climax of harshness was reached in the Geary law, which required, within an unreasonably short time, the registration of all Chinese in the United States. The Chinese, under legal advice, refused to register until the Federal Supreme Court had declared the law constitutional. Subsequently the time for registration was extended.

The anti-Chinese fanaticism had now reached its highest point. While the Government maintained its policy of exclusion, it modified the drastic details of the law. In 1894 a new treaty provided for the exclusion of laborers for ten years, excepting registered laborers who had either parent, wife, or child in the United States, or who possessed property or debts to the amount of one thousand dollars. It required all resident Chinese laborers to register, and the Chinese Government was similarly entitled to require the registration of all American laborers resident in China. The treaty made optional the clause requiring merchants, travelers, and other classes privileged to come to the United States, to secure a certificate from their Government viséd by the American representative at the port of departure.

In 1898 General Otis extended the exclusion acts to the Philippines by military order, owing to the fact that the country was in a state of war, and Congress extended them to the Hawaiian Islands. In 1904 China refused to continue the treaty of 1894, and Congress substantially reënacted the existing laws "in so far as not inconsistent with treaty obligations." Thus the legal *status quo* has been maintained, and the Chinese population in

America is gradually decreasing. No new laborers are permitted to come and those now here go home as old age overtakes them. But the public has come to recognize that diplomatic circumlocution cannot conceal the crude and harsh treatment which the Chinaman has received; that the earlier laws were based upon reports that greatly exaggerated the evils and were silent upon the virtues of the Oriental; and that a policy which had its conception in frontier fears and in race prejudice was sustained by politicians and perpetuated by demagogues.

Rather suddenly the whole drama of discrimination was re-opened by the arrival of a considerable number of Japanese laborers in America. In 1900, there were some twenty-four thousand in the United States and a decade later this number had increased threefold. About one-half of them lived in California, and the rest were to be found throughout the West, especially in Washington, Colorado, and Oregon. They were nearly all unmarried young men of the peasant class. Unlike the Chinese, they manifested a readiness to conform to American customs and an eagerness to learn the language and to adopt American dress. The racial gulf, however, is not bridged by a similarity in externals. The Japanese possess all the deep and subtle contrasts

of mentality and ideality which differentiate the Orient from the Occident. A few are not averse to adopting Christianity; many more are free-thinkers; but the bulk remain loyal to Buddhism. They have reproduced here the compact trade guilds of Japan. The persistent aggressiveness of the Japanese, their cunning, their aptitude in taking advantage of critical circumstances in making bargains, have by contrast partially restored to popular favor the patient, reliable Chinaman.

At first the Japanese were welcomed as unskilled laborers. They found employment on the railroads, in lumber mills and salmon canneries, in mines and on farms, and in domestic service. But they soon showed a keen propensity for owning or leasing land. The Immigration Commission found that in 1909 they owned over sixteen thousand acres in California and leased over one hundred and thirty-seven thousand. Nearly all of this land they had acquired in the preceding five years. In Colorado they controlled over twenty thousand acres, and in Idaho and Washington over seven thousand acres each. This acreage represents small holdings devoted to intensive agriculture, especially to the raising of sugar beets, vegetables, and small fruits.



The hostility which began to manifest itself against the Japanese especially in California brought that State into sharp contact with the Federal Government. In 1906 the San Francisco authorities excluded the Japanese from the public schools. This act was immediately and vigorously protested by the Japanese Government. After due investigation, the matter was finally adjusted at a conference held in Washington between President Roosevelt and a delegation from California. This incident served to re-awaken the ghost of Mongolian domination on the Pacific coast, for it occurred during the notorious régime of Mayor Schmitz. Labor politics were rampant. Isolated instances of violence against Japanese occurred, and hoodlums, without fear of police interference, attacked a number of Japanese restaurants. Political candidates were pledged to an anti-Japanese policy.

In 1907 the two governments reached an agreement whereby the details of issuing passports to Japanese laborers who desired to return to the United States was virtually left in the hands of the Japanese Government, which was opposed to the emigration of its laboring population. As a consequence of this agreement, passports are granted



only to laborers who had previously been residents of the United States or to parents, wives, and children of Japanese laborers resident in America. Under authority of the immigration law of 1907, the President issued an order (March 14, 1907) denying admission to "Japanese and Korean laborers, skilled or unskilled, who have received passports to go to Mexico, Canada, Hawaii and come therefrom" to the United States.

Anti-Japanese feeling was crystallized into the alien land bill of California in 1913. So serious was the international situation that President Wilson sent Mr. Bryan, then Secretary of State, across the continent to confer with the California legislature and to determine upon some action that would at the same time meet the needs of the State and "leave untouched the international obligations of the United States." The law subsequently passed was thought by the Californians to appease both of these demands.<sup>1</sup> But the Japanese Government made no less than five vigorous formal protests

<sup>1</sup> The Alien Land Act of May 19, 1913, confers upon all aliens eligible to citizenship the same rights as citizens in the owning and leasing of real property; but in the case of other aliens (*i.e.* Asiatics) it limits leases of land for agricultural purposes to terms not exceeding three years and permits ownership "to the extent and for the purposes prescribed by any treaty."

and filled a lengthy brief which characterized the law as unfair and intentionally discriminating and in violation of the treaty of Commerce and Navigation entered into in 1911. While anti-Japanese demonstrations were taking place in Washington, there was a corresponding outbreak of anti-American feeling in the streets of Tokyo. On February 2, 1914, during the debate on a new immigration bill, an amendment was proposed in the House of Representatives, at the instigation of members from the Pacific coast, excluding all Asiatics, except such as had their entry right established by treaty. But this drastic proposal was defeated by a decisive vote.

The oriental question in America is further complicated by the fact that since 1905 some five thousand East Indians have come to the United States. Of these the majority are Hindoos, the remainder being chiefly Afghans. How these people who have lived under British rule will adapt themselves to American life and institutions remains to be seen.

## CHAPTER X

### RACIAL INFILTRATION

WITH the free land gone and the cities crowded to overflowing, the door of immigration, though guarded, nevertheless remains open and the pressure of the old-world peoples continues. Where can they go? They are filling in the vacant spots of the older States, the abandoned farms, stagnant half-empty villages, undrained swamps, uninviting rocky hillsides. This infiltration of foreigners possessing themselves of rejected and abandoned land, which has only recently begun, shows that the peasant's instinct for the soil will reassert itself when the means are available and the way opens.

It is surprising, indeed, how many are the ways that are opening for this movement. Transportation companies are responsible for a number of colonies planted bodily in cut-over timber regions of the South. The journals and the real estate agents of the different races are always alert to spy out

opportunities. Dealing in second-hand farms has become a considerable industry. The advertising columns of Chicago papers announce hundreds of farms for sale in northern Michigan and Wisconsin. In all the older States there are for sale thousands of acres of tillable land which have been left by the restless shiftings of the American population. In New England the abandoned farm has long been an institution. Throughout the East there are depleted and dying villages, their solidly built cottages hidden in the matting of trees and shrubs which neglect has woven about them. One can see paralysis creeping over them as the vines creep over their deserted thresholds and they surrender one by one the little industries that gave them life.

These are the opportunities of the immigrant peasant. Wherever the new migration swarms, there the receding tide leaves a few energetic individuals who have made for themselves a permanent home. In the wake of construction gangs and along the lines of railways and canals one discovers these immigrant families taking root in the soil. In the smaller cities, an immigrant day laborer will often invest his savings in a tumble-down house and an acre of land, and almost at once he becomes the nucleus for a gathering of his kind.

The market gardens that surround the large cities offer work to the children of the factory operatives, and there they swarm over beet and onion fields like huge insects with an unerring instinct for weeds. Now and then a family finds a forgotten acre, builds a shack, and starts a small independent market garden. Within a few years a whole settlement of shacks grows up around it, and soon the trucking of the neighborhood is in foreign hands. Seasonal agricultural work often carries the immigrant into distant canning centers, hop fields, cranberry marshes, orchards, and vineyards. Every time a migration of this sort occurs, some settlers remain on land previously thought unfit for cultivation — perhaps a swamp which they drain or a sand-hill which they fertilize and nurture into surprising fertility by constant toil. This racial seepage is confined almost wholly to the Italian and the Slav.

There is a vast acreage of unoccupied good land in the South, which the negro, usually satisfied with a bare living, has neither the enterprise nor the thrift to cultivate. The prejudice of the former slave owner against the foreign immigration for many years retarded the development of this land. About 1880, however, groups of Italians, attracted by the sunny climate and the opportunities for

making a livelihood, began to seep into Louisiana. By 1900 they numbered over seventeen thousand. When direct sailings between the Mediterranean and the Gulf of Mexico were established, their numbers increased rapidly and New Orleans became one of the leading Italian centers in the United States. From the city they soon spread into the adjoining region. Today they grow cotton, sugarcane, and rice in nearly all the Southern States. In the deep black loam of the Yazoo Delta they prosper as cotton growers. They have transformed the neglected slopes of the Ozarks into apple and peach orchards. New Orleans, Dallas, Galveston, Houston, San Antonio, and other Southern cities are supplied with vegetables from the Italian truck farms. At Independence, Louisiana, a colony raises strawberries. In the black belt of Arkansas they established Sunnyside in 1895, a colony which has survived many vicissitudes and has been the parent of other similar enterprises. In Texas there are a number of such colonies, of which the largest, at Bryan, numbers nearly two thousand persons. In California the Italian owns farms, orchards, vineyards, market gardens, and even ranches. Here he finds the cloudless sky and mild air of his native land. The sunny slopes invite vine culture.

In the North and the East the alert Italian has found many opportunities to buy land. In the environs of nearly every city northward from Norfolk, Virginia, are to be found his truck patches. At Vineland and Hammonton, New Jersey, large colonies have flourished for many years. In New York and Pennsylvania, many a hill farm that was too rocky for its Yankee owner, and many a back-breaking clay moraine in Ohio and Indiana has been purchased for a small cash payment and, under the stimulus of the family's coaxing, now yields paying crops, while the father himself also earns a daily wage in the neighboring town. Where one such Italian family is to be found, there are sure to be found at least two or three others in the neighborhood, for the Italians hate isolation more than hunger. Often they are clustered in colonies, as at Genoa and Cumberland in Wisconsin, where most of them are railroad workmen paying for the land out of their wages.

The Slavs, too, wedge into the most surprising spaces. Their colonies and settlements are to be found in considerable numbers in every part of the Union except the far South. They are on the cut-over timber lands of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, usually engaged in dairying or raising



vegetables for canning. On the great prairies in Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, and the Dakotas, the Bohemians and the Poles have learned to raise wheat and corn, and in Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, they have shown themselves skillful in cotton raising. Wherever fruit is grown on the Pacific slope, there are Bohemians, Slavonians, and Dalmatians. In New England, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Maryland, the Poles have become pioneers in the neglected corners of the land. For instance in Orange County, New York, a thriving settlement from old Poland now flourishes where a quarter of a century ago there was only a mosquito breeding swamp. The drained area produces the most surprising crops of onions, lettuce, and celery. Many of these immigrants own their little farms. Others work on shares in anticipation of ownership, and still others labor merely for the season, transients who spend the winter either in American factories or flit back to their native land.

In Pennsylvania it is the mining towns which furnished recruits for this landward movement. In some of the counties an exchange of population has been taking place for a decade or more. The land dwelling Americans are moving into the towns and

cities. The farms are offered for sale. Enterprising Slavic real estate dealers are not slow in persuading their fellow countrymen to invest their savings in land.

The Slavonic infiltration has been most marked in New England, especially in the Connecticut Valley. From manufacturing centers like Chicopee, Worcester, Ware, Westfield, and Fitchburg, areas of Polish settlements radiate in every direction, alien spokes from American hubs. Here are little farming villages ready made in attractive settings whose vacant houses invite the alien peasant. A Polish family moves into a sedate colonial house; often a second family shares the place, sometimes a third or a fourth, each with a brood of children and often a boarder or two. The American families left in the neighborhood are scandalized by this promiscuity, by the bare feet and bare heads, by the unspeakable fare, the superstition and credulity, and illiteracy and disregard for sanitary measures, and by the ant-like industry from starlight to starlight. Old Hadley has become a prototype of what may become general if this racial infiltration is not soon checked. In 1906 the Poles numbered one-fifth of the population in that town, owned one-twentieth of the land, and produced

two-thirds of the babies. Dignified old streets that formerly echoed with the tread of patriots now resound to the din of Polish weddings and christenings, and the town that sheltered William Goffe, one of the judges before whom Charles I was tried, now houses Polish transients at twenty-five cents a bed weekly.

The transient usually returns to Europe, but the landowner remains. His kind is increasing yearly. It is even probable that in a generation he will be the chief landowner of the Connecticut Valley. It will take more than an association of old families, determined on keeping the ancient homes in their own hands, to check this transformation.

The process of racial replacement is most rapid in the smaller manufacturing towns. In the New England mills the Yankee gave way to the Irish, the Irish gave way to the French Canadian, and the French Canadian has been largely superseded by the Slav and the Italian. Every one of the older industrial towns has been encrusted in layer upon layer of foreign accretions, until it is difficult to discover the American core. Everywhere are the physiognomy, the chatter, and the aroma of the modern steerage. Lawrence, Massachusetts, is

typical of this change. In 1848 it had 5923 inhabitants, of whom 63.3 per cent were Americans, 36 per cent were Irish, and about forty white persons belonged to other nationalities. In 1910 the same city had 85,000 inhabitants, of whom only about 14 per cent were Americans, and the rest foreigners, two-thirds of the old and one-third of the new immigration.

A like transformation has taken place in the manufacturing towns of New York, New Jersey, and Delaware and in the iron and steel towns of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and the Middle West. For forty years after the establishment of the first iron furnace in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, in 1842, the mills were manned exclusively by Americans, English, Welsh, Irish, and Germans. In 1880 Slavic names began to appear on the pay rolls. Soon thereafter Italians and Syrians were brought into the town, and today sixty per cent of the population is of foreign birth, largely from southeastern Europe. The native Americans and Welsh live in two wards, and clustered around them are settlements of Italians, Slovaks, and Croatsians.

The new manufacturing towns which are dependent upon some single industry are almost wholly composed of recent immigrants. Gary, Indiana,

built by the United States Steel Corporation, and Whiting, Indiana, established by the Standard Oil Company for its refining industry, are examples of new American towns of exotic populations. At a glass factory built in 1890 in the village of Charleroi, Pennsylvania, over ten thousand Belgians, French, Slavs, and Italians now labor. An example of lightning-like displacement of population is afforded by the steel and iron center at Granite City and Madison, Illinois. The two towns are practically one industrial community, although they have separate municipal organizations. A steel mill was erected in 1892 upon the open prairies, and in it American, Welsh, Irish, English, German, and Polish workmen were employed. In 1900 Slovaks were brought in, and two years later there came large numbers of Magyars, followed by Croatians. In 1905 Bulgarians began to arrive, and within two years over eight thousand had assembled. Armenians, Servians, Greeks, Magyars, every ethnic faction found in the racial welter of southeastern Europe, is represented among the twenty thousand inhabitants that dwell in this new industrial town. In "Hungary Hollow" these race fragments isolate themselves, effectively insulated against the currents of American influence.

The mining communities reveal this relative displacement of races in its most disheartening form. As early as 1820 coal was taken from the anthracite veins of northeastern Pennsylvania, but until 1880 the industry was dominated by Americans and north Europeans. In 1870 out of 108,000 foreign born in this region, 105,000 or over ninety-seven per cent came from England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and Germany. In 1880 a change began and continued until in 1910 less than one-third of the 267,000 foreign born were of northern European extraction. In 1870 there were only 306 Slavs and Italians in the entire region; in 1890 there were 43,000; in 1909 there were 89,000; and in 1910 the number increased to 178,000.

Today these immigrants from the south of Europe have virtually displaced the miner from the north. They have rooted out the decencies and comforts of the earlier operatives and have supplanted them with the promiscuity, the filth, and the low economic standards of the medieval peasant. There are no more desolate and distressing places in America than the miserable mining "patches" clinging like lichens to the steep hillsides or secluded in the valleys of Pennsylvania. In the bituminous fields conditions are no better.

In the town of Windber in western Pennsylvania, for example, some two thousand experienced English and American miners were engaged in opening the veins in 1897. No sooner were the mines in operation than the south European began to drift in. Today he outnumbers and underbids the American and the north European. He lives in isolated sections, reeking with everything that keeps him a "foreigner" in the heart of America. The coal regions of Virginia, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois and the ore regions of northern Michigan and Minnesota are rapidly passing under the same influence.

Every mining and manufacturing community is thus an ethnic pool, whence little streams of foreigners trickle over the land. These isolated miners and tillers of the soil are more immune to American ideals than are their city dwelling brethren. They are not jostled and shaken by other races; no mental contagion of democracy reaches them.

But within the towns and cities another process of replacement is going on. Its index is written large in the signs over shops and stores and clearly in the lists of professional men in the city directories and in the pay roll of the public school teachers. The unpronounceable Slavic combinations of



consonants and polysyllabic Jewish patronymics are plentiful, while here and there an Italian name makes its appearance. The second generation is arriving. The sons and daughters are leaving the factory and the construction gang for the counter, the office, and the schoolroom.

American ideals and institutions have borne and can bear a great deal of foreign infiltration. But can they withstand saturation?

## CHAPTER XI

### THE GUARDED DOOR

“WHOSOEVER will may come” was the generous welcome which America extended to all the world for over a century. Many alarms, indeed, there were and several well-defined movements to save America from the foreigner. The first of these attempts resulted in the ill-fated Alien and Sedition laws of 1798, which extended to fourteen years the period of probation before a foreigner could be naturalized and which attempted to safeguard the Government against defamatory attacks. The Jeffersonians, who came into power in 1801 largely upon the issue raised by this attempt to curtail free speech, made short shrift of this unpopular law and restored the term of residence to five years. The second anti-foreign movement found expression in the Know-Nothing party, which rose in the decade preceding the Civil War. The third movement brought about a secret order called the American

Protective Association, popularly known as the A. P. A., which, like the Know-Nothing hysteria, was aimed primarily at the Catholic Church. Its platform stated that "the conditions growing out of our immigration laws are such as to weaken our democratic institutions," and that "the immigrant vote, under the direction of certain ecclesiastical institutions," controlled politics. In 1896 the organization claimed two and a half million adherents, and the air was vibrant with ominous rumors of impending events. But nothing happened. The A. P. A. disappeared suddenly and left no trace.

For over a century it was almost universally believed that the prosperity of the country depended largely upon a copious influx of population. This sentiment found expression in President Lincoln's message to Congress on December 8, 1863, in which he called immigration a "source of national wealth and strength" and urged Congress to establish "a system for the encouragement of immigration." In conformity with this suggestion, Congress passed a law designed to aid the importation of labor under contract. But the measure was soon repealed, so that it remains the only instance in American history in which the Federal

Government attempted the direct encouragement of general immigration.<sup>1</sup>

It was in 1819 that the first Federal law pertaining to immigration was passed. It was not prompted by any desire to regulate or restrict immigration, but aimed rather to correct the terrible abuses to which immigrants were subject on ship-board. So crowded and unwholesome were these quarters that a substantial percentage of all the immigrants who embarked for America perished during the voyage. The law provided that ships could carry only two passengers for every five tons burden; it enjoined a sufficient supply of water and food for crew and passengers; and it required the captains of vessels to prepare lists of their passengers giving age, sex, occupation, and the country whence they came. The law, however good its intention, was loosely drawn and indifferently enforced. Terrible abuses of steerage passengers crowded into miserable quarters were constantly brought to the public notice. From time to time the law was amended, and the advent of steam navigation brought improved conditions without, however, adequate provision for Federal inspection.

<sup>1</sup> Congress has on several occasions granted aid for specific colonies or groups of immigrants.

Indeed such supervision and care as immigrants received was provided by the various States. Boston, New York, Baltimore, and other ports of entry, found helpless hordes left at their doors. They were the prey of loan sharks and land sharks, of fake employment agencies, and every conceivable form of swindler. Private relief was organized, but it could reach only a small portion of the needy. About three-fourths of the immigrants disembarked at the port of New York, and upon the State of New York was imposed the obligation of looking after the thousands of strangers who landed weekly at the Battery. To cope with these conditions the State devised a comprehensive system and entrusted its enforcement to a Board of Commissioners of Immigration, erected hospitals on Ward's Island for sick and needy immigrants, and in 1855 leased for a landing place Castle Garden, which at once became the popular synonym for the nation's gateway. Here the Commissioners examined and registered the immigrants, placed at their disposal physicians, money changers, transportation agents, and advisers, and extended to them a helping hand. The Federal Government was represented only by the customs officers who ransacked their baggage.

In 1875 the Federal Supreme Court decided that it was unconstitutional for a State to regulate immigration. "We are of the opinion," said the Court, "that this whole subject has been confided to Congress by the Constitution; that Congress can more appropriately and with more acceptance exercise it than any other body known to our law, state or national; that, by providing a system of laws in these matters applicable to all ports and to all vessels, a serious question which has long been a matter of contest and complaint may be effectively and satisfactorily settled."<sup>1</sup> Congress dallied seven years with this important question, and was finally forced to act when New York threatened to close Castle Garden. In 1882 a Federal immigration law assessed a head tax of fifty cents on every passenger, not a citizen, coming to the United States, and provided that the States should share with the Secretary of the Treasury the obligation of its enforcement. This law inaugurated the policy of selective immigration, as it excluded convicts, lunatics, idiots, and persons likely to become a public charge. Three years later, contract laborers were also excluded.

<sup>1</sup> Henderson et al. *vs.* The Mayor of New York City et al. 92 U.S., 259.

The unprecedented influx of immigrants now began to arouse public discussion. Over 788,000 arrived in America during the first year the new law was in operation. In 1889 both the Senate and the House appointed standing committees on immigration. The several investigations which were held culminated in the law of 1891, wherein the list of ineligibles was extended to include persons suffering from a loathsome or contagious disease, polygamists, and persons assisted in coming by others, unless upon special inquiry they were found not to belong to any of the excluded classes. Thus for the first time the Federal Government assumed complete control of immigration. Now also both the great political parties adopted planks in their national platforms favoring the restriction of immigration. The Republicans favored "the enactment of more stringent laws and regulations for the restriction of criminal, pauper, and contract immigration." The Democrats "heartily" approved "all legislative efforts to prevent the United States from being used as a dumping ground for the known criminals and professional paupers of Europe," and they favored the exclusion of Chinese laborers. They favored, however, the admission of "industrious and worthy" Europeans.



Selective immigration thus became a political issue in 1892, partly under the stimulus of labor unions, which feared an over-supply of labor, and partly because of the growing popular belief that many undesirable foreigners were entering the country. No adequate and just criteria for any process of selection have been discovered. In 1896 Senator Lodge introduced an immigration bill, which contained the famous literacy test, excluding all persons between fourteen and sixty years of age "who cannot both read and write the English language or some other language." The bill was simultaneously introduced into the House of Representatives by McCall of Massachusetts. The debate on this measure marks a new departure in immigration policy. A senatorial inquiry made among the States in the preceding year had disclosed a universal preference for immigrants from northern Europe. Moreover, a number of States through their governors, had declared that further immigration was not desired immediately; and the opinion prevailed that the great influx from southeastern Europe should be checked. Fortified by such solidarity of sentiment, Congress passed the Lodge bill with certain amendments. President Cleveland, however, returned it with a strong veto

message on March 2, 1897. He could not concur in so radical a departure from the traditional liberal policy of the Government; and he believed the literacy test so artificial that it was more rational "to admit a hundred thousand immigrants who, though unable to read and write, seek among us only a home and opportunity to work, than to admit one of those unruly agitators and enemies of governmental control who can not only read and write, but delights in arousing by inflammatory speech the illiterate and peacefully inclined to discontent and tumult." The House passed the bill over the President's veto, but the Senate took no further action.

In 1898 the Industrial Commission was empowered "to investigate questions pertaining to immigration" and presented a report which prepared the way for the immigration law of 1903, approved on the 3rd of March. This law, which was based upon a careful preliminary inquiry, may be called the first comprehensive American immigration statute. It perfected the administrative machinery, raised the head tax, and multiplied the vigilance of the Government against evasions by the excluded classes. Anarchists and prostitutes were added to the list of excluded persons. The literacy

test was inserted by the House but was rejected by the Senate.

This law, however, did not allay the demand for a more stringent restriction of immigration. A few persons believed in stopping immigration entirely for a period of years. Others would limit the number of immigrants that should be permitted to enter every year. But it was felt throughout the country that such arbitrary checks would be merely quantitative, not qualitative, and that undesirable foreigners should be denied admission, no matter what country they hailed from. A notable immigration conference which was called by the National Civic Federation in December, 1905, and which represented all manner of public bodies, recommended the "exclusion of persons of enfeebled vitality" and proposed "a preliminary inspection of intending immigrants before they embark." President Roosevelt laid the whole matter before Congress in several vigorous messages in 1906 and 1907. He pointed to the fact that

In the year ending June 30, 1905, there came to the United States 1,026,000 alien immigrants. In other words, in the single year . . . there came . . . a greater number of people than came here during the one hundred and sixty-nine years of our colonial life.

. . . It is clearly shown in the report of the Commissioner General of Immigration that, while much of this enormous immigration is undoubtedly healthy and natural . . . a considerable proportion of it, probably a very large proportion, including most of the undesirable class, does not come here of its own initiative but because of the activity of the agents of the great transportation companies. . . . The prime need is to keep out all immigrants who will not make good American citizens.

In consonance with this spirit, the law of 1907 was passed. It increased the head tax to four dollars and provided rigid scrutiny over the transportation companies. The excluded classes of immigrants were minutely defined, and the powers and duties of the Commissioner General of Immigration were very considerably enlarged. The act also created the Immigration Commission, consisting of three Senators, three members of the House, and three persons appointed by the President, for making "full inquiry, examination, and investigation . . . into the subject of immigration." Endowed with plenary power, this commission made a comprehensive investigation of the whole question. The President was authorized to "send special commissioners to any foreign country for the purpose of regulating by international

agreement . . . the immigration of aliens to the United States."

Here at last is congressional recognition of the fact that immigration is no longer merely a domestic question, but that it has, through modern economic conditions, become one of serious international import. No treaties have been perfected under this authority. The question, however, received serious attention in 1909 when Lieutenant Joseph Petrosino of the New York police was murdered in Sicily by banditti, whither he had pursued a Black Hand criminal from the East Side.

In the meantime many measures for restricting immigration were suggested in Congress. Of these, the literacy test met with the most favor. Three times in recent years Congress enacted it into law, and each time it was returned with executive disapproval: President Taft vetoed the provision in 1913, and President Wilson vetoed the acts of 1915 and 1917. In his last veto message on January 29, 1917, President Wilson said that "the literacy test . . . is not a test of character, of quality, or of personal fitness, but would operate in most cases merely as a penalty for lack of opportunity in the country from which the alien seeking admission came."

Congress, however, promptly passed the bill over the President's objections, and so twenty years after President Cleveland's veto of the Lodge Bill, the literacy test became the standard of fitness for immigrant admission into the United States.<sup>1</sup> The law excludes all aliens over sixteen years of age who are physically capable of reading and yet who cannot read. They are required to read "not less than thirty or more than eighty words in ordinary use" in the English language or some other language or dialect. Aliens who seek admission because of religious persecution, and certain relatives of citizens or of admissible aliens, are exempted.

The debate upon this law disclosed the transformation that has come over the nation in its attitude towards the alien. Exclusion was the dominant word. Senator Reed of Missouri wished to exclude African immigrants; the Pacific coast Representatives insisted upon exclusion of Asiatics, in the face of serious admonitions of the Secretary of State that such a course would cause international friction; the labor members were scornful in their denunciation of "the pauper and criminal classes" of Europe. The traditional liberal sympathies of the American people found but few

<sup>1</sup> The new act took effect May 1, 1917.

champions, so completely had the change been wrought in the thirty years since the Federal Government assumed control of immigration.

By these tokens the days of unlimited freedom in migration are numbered. Nations are beginning to realize that immigration is but the obverse of emigration. Its dual character constitutes a problem requiring delicate international readjustments. Moreover, the countries released to a new life and those quickened to a new industrialism by the Great War will need to employ all their muscle and talents at home.

It is an inspiring drama of colonization that has been enacted on this continent in a relatively short period. Its like was never witnessed before and can never be witnessed again. Thirty-three nationalities were represented in the significant group of American pilgrims that gathered at Mount Vernon on July 4, 1918, to place garlands of native flowers upon the tomb of Washington and to pledge their honor and loyalty to the nation of their adoption. This event is symbolic of the great fact that the United States is, after all, a nation of immigrants, among whom the word foreigner is descriptive of an attitude of mind rather than of a place of birth.





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PART II

THE ARMIES OF LABOR

A CHRONICLE  
OF THE ORGANIZED WAGE-EARNERS  
BY  
SAMUEL P. ORTH

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# THE ARMIES OF LABOR

## CHAPTER I

### THE BACKGROUND

THREE momentous things symbolize the era that begins its cycle with the memorable year of 1776: the Declaration of Independence, the steam engine, and Adam Smith's book, *The Wealth of Nations*. The Declaration gave birth to a new nation, whose millions of acres of free land were to shift the economic equilibrium of the world; the engine multiplied man's productivity a thousandfold and uprooted in a generation the customs of centuries; the book gave to statesmen a new view of economic affairs and profoundly influenced the course of international trade relations.

The American people, as they faced the approaching age with the experiences of the race behind them, fashioned many of their institutions



and laws on British models. This is true to such an extent that the subject of this book, the rise of labor in America, cannot be understood without a preliminary survey of the British industrial system nor even without some reference to the feudal system, of which English society for many centuries bore the marks and to which many relics of tenure and of class and governmental responsibility may be traced. Feudalism was a society in which the status of an individual was fixed: he was underman or overman in a rigid social scale according as he considered his relation to his superiors or to his inferiors. Whatever movement there was took place horizontally, in the same class or on the same social level. The movement was not vertical, as it so frequently is today, and men did not ordinarily rise above the social level of their birth, never by design, and only perhaps by rare accident or genius. It was a little world of lords and serfs: of knights who graced court and castle, jousted at tournaments, or fought upon the field of battle; and of serfs who toiled in the fields, served in the castle, or, as the retainers of the knight, formed the crude soldiery of medieval days. For their labor and allegiance they were clothed and housed and fed. Yet though there were feast days with

the color of pageantry and procession, the worker was always in a servile state, an underman dependent upon his master, and sometimes looking upon his condition as little better than slavery.

With the break-up of this rigid system came in England the emancipation of the serf, the rise of the artisan class, and the beginnings of peasant agriculture. That personal gravitation which always draws together men of similar ambitions and tasks now began to work significant changes in the economic order. The peasantry, more or less scattered in the country, found it difficult to unite their powers for redressing their grievances, although there were some peasant revolts of no mean proportions. But the artisans of the towns were soon grouped into powerful organizations, called guilds, so carefully managed and so well disciplined that they dominated every craft and controlled every detail in every trade. The relation of master to journeyman and apprentice, the wages, hours, quantity, and quality of the output, were all minutely regulated. Merchant guilds, similarly constituted, also prospered. The magnificent guild halls that remain in our day are monuments of the power and splendor of these organizations that made the towns of the later Middle Ages flourishing

centers of trade, of handicrafts, and of art. As towns developed, they dealt the final blow to an agricultural system based on feudalism: they became cities of refuge for the runaway serfs, and their charters, insuring political and economic freedom, gave them superior advantages for trading.

The guild system of manufacture was gradually replaced by the domestic system. The workman's cottage, standing in its garden, housed the loom and the spinning wheel, and the entire family was engaged in labor at home. But the workman, thus apparently independent, was not the owner of either the raw material or the finished product. A middleman or agent brought him the wool, carried away the cloth, and paid him his hire. Daniel Defoe, who made a tour of Britain in 1724-6, left a picture of rural England in this period, often called the golden age of labor. The land, he says, "was divided into small inclosures from two acres to six or seven each, seldom more: every three or four pieces of land had an house belonging to them, . . . hardly an house standing out of a speaking distance from another. . . . We could see at every house a tenter, and on almost every tenter a piece of cloth or kersie or shalloon. . . . At every considerable house was a manufactory. . . . Every

clothier keeps one horse, at least, to carry his manufactures to the market and every one generally keeps a cow or two or more for his family. By this means the small pieces of inclosed land about each house are occupied, for they scarce sow corn enough to feed their poultry. . . . The houses are full of lusty fellows, some at the dye vat, some at the looms, others dressing the clothes; the women or children carding or spinning, being all employed, from the youngest to the oldest.”

But more significant than these changes was the rise of the so-called mercantile system, in which the state took under its care industrial details that were formerly regulated by the town or guild. This system, beginning in the sixteenth century and lasting through the eighteenth, had for its prime object the upbuilding of national trade. The state, in order to insure the homogeneous development of trade and industry, dictated the prices of commodities. It prescribed the laws of apprenticeship and the rules of master and servant. It provided inspectors for passing on the quality of goods offered for sale. It weighed the loaves, measured the cloth, and tested the silverware. It prescribed wages, rural and urban, and bade the local justice act as a sort of guardian over the

laborers in his district. To relieve poverty poor laws were passed; to prevent the decline of productivity corn laws were passed fixing arbitrary prices for grain. For a time monopolies creating artificial prosperity were granted to individuals and to corporations for the manufacture, sale, or exploitation of certain articles, such as matches, gunpowder, and playing-cards.

This highly artificial and paternalistic state was not content with regulating all these internal matters but spread its protection over foreign commerce. Navigation acts attempted to monopolize the trade of the colonies and especially the trade in the products needed by the mother country. England encouraged shipping and during this period achieved that dominance of the sea which has been the mainstay of her vast empire. She fostered plantations and colonies not for their own sake but that they might be tributaries to the wealth of the nation. An absurd importance was attached to the possession of gold and silver, and the ingenuity of statesmen was exhausted in designing lures to entice these metals to London. Banking and insurance began to assume prime importance. By 1750 England had sent ships into every sea and had planted colonies around the globe.

But while the mechanism of trade and of government made surprising progress during the mercantile period, the mechanism of production remained in the slow handicraft stage. This was now to change. In 1738 Kay invented the flying shuttle, multiplying the capacity of the loom. In 1767 Hargreaves completed the spinning-jenny, and in 1771 Arkwright perfected his roller spinning machine. A few years later Crompton combined the roller and the jenny, and after the application of steam to spinning in 1785 the power loom replaced the hand loom. The manufacture of woolen cloth being the principal industry of England, it was natural that machinery should first be invented for the spinning and weaving of wool. New processes in the manufacture of iron and steel and the development of steam transportation soon followed.

Within the course of a few decades the whole economic order was changed. Whereas many centuries had been required for the slow development of the medieval system of feudalism, the guild system, and the handicrafts, now, like a series of earthquake shocks, came changes so sudden and profound that even today society has not yet learned to adjust itself to the myriads of needs

and possibilities which the union of man's mind with nature's forces has produced. The industrial revolution took the workman from the land and crowded him into the towns. It took the loom from his cottage and placed it in the factory. It took the tool from his hand and harnessed it to a shaft. It robbed him of his personal skill and joined his arm of flesh to an arm of iron. It reduced him from a craftsman to a specialist, from a maker of shoes to a mere stitcher of soles. It took from him, at a single blow, his interest in the workmanship of his task, his ownership of the tools, his garden, his wholesome environment, and even his family. All were swallowed by the black maw of the ugly new mill town. The hardships of the old days were soon forgotten in the horrors of the new. For the transition was rapid enough to make the contrast striking. Indeed it was so rapid that the new class of employers, the capitalists, found little time to think of anything but increasing their profits, and the new class of employees, now merely wage-earners, found that their long hours of monotonous toil gave them little leisure and no interest.

The transition from the age of handicrafts to the era of machines presents a picture of greed that



tempts one to bitter invective. Its details are dispassionately catalogued by the Royal Commissions that finally towards the middle of the nineteenth century inquired into industrial conditions. From these reports Karl Marx drew inspiration for his social philosophy, and in them his friend Engels found the facts that he retold so vividly, for the purpose of arousing his fellow workmen. And Carlyle and Ruskin, reading this official record of selfishness, and knowing its truth, drew their powerful indictments against a society which would permit its eight-year-old daughters, its mothers, and its grandmothers, to be locked up for fourteen hours a day in dirty, ill-smelling factories, to release them at night only to find more misery in the hovels they pitifully called home.

The introduction of machinery into manufacturing wrought vast changes also in the organization of business. The unit of industry greatly increased in size. The economies of organized wholesale production were soon made apparent; and the tendency to increase the size of the factory and to amalgamate the various branches of industry under corporate control has continued to the present. The complexity of business operations also increased with the development of transportation

and the expansion of the empire of trade. A world market took the place of the old town market, and the world market necessitated credit on a new and infinitely larger scale.

No less important than the revolution in industry was the revolution in economic theory which accompanied it. Unlimited competition replaced the state paternalism of the mercantilists. Adam Smith in 1776 espoused the cause of economic liberty, believing that if business and industry were unhampered by artificial restrictions they would work out their own salvation. His pronouncement was scarcely uttered before it became the shibboleth of statesmen and business men. The revolt of the American colonies hastened the general acceptance of this doctrine, and England soon found herself committed to the practice of every man looking after his own interests. Freedom of contract, freedom of trade, and freedom of thought were vigorous and inspiring but often misleading phrases. The processes of specialization and centralization that were at work portended the growing power of those who possessed the means to build factories and ships and railways but not necessarily the freedom of the many. The doctrine of *laissez faire* assumed that power would bring with

it a sense of responsibility. For centuries, the old-country gentry and governing class of England had shown an appreciation of their duties, as a class, to those dependent upon them. But now another class with no benevolent traditions of responsibility came into power — the capitalist, a parvenu whose ambition was profit, not equity, and whose dealings with other men were not tempered by the amenities of the gentleman but were sharpened by the necessities of gain. It was upon such a class, new in the economic world and endowed with astounding power, that Adam Smith's new formularies of freedom were let loose.

During all these changes in the economic order, the interest of the laborer centered in one question: What return would he receive for his toil? With the increasing complexity of society, many other problems presented themselves to the worker, but for the most part they were subsidiary to the main question of wages. As long as man's place was fixed by law or custom, a customary wage left small margin for controversy. But when fixed status gave way to voluntary contract, when payment was made in money, when workmen were free to journey from town to town, labor became both free and fluid, bargaining took the place of custom,

and the wage controversy began to assume definite proportions. As early as 1348 the great plague became a landmark in the field of wage disputes. So scarce had laborers become through the ravages of the Black Death, that wages rose rapidly, to the alarm of the employers, who prevailed upon King Edward III to issue the historic proclamation of 1349, directing that no laborer should demand and no employer should pay greater wages than those customary before the plague. This early attempt to outmaneuver an economic law by a legal device was only the prelude to a long series of labor laws which may be said to have culminated in the great Statute of Laborers of 1562, regulating the relations of wage-earner and employer and empowering justices of the peace to fix the wages in their districts. Wages steadily decreased during the two hundred years in which this statute remained in force, and poor laws were passed to bring the succor which artificial wages made necessary. Thus two rules of arbitrary government were meant to neutralize each other. It is the usual verdict of historians that the estate of labor in England declined from a flourishing condition in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to one of great distress by the time of the Industrial

Revolution. This unhappy decline was probably due to several causes, among which the most important were the arbitrary and artificial attempts of the Government to keep down wages, the heavy taxation caused by wars of expansion, and the want of coercive power on the part of labor.

From the decline of the guild system, which had placed labor and its products so completely in the hands of the master craftsman, the workman had assumed no controlling part in the labor bargain. Such guilds and such journeyman's fraternities as may have survived were practically helpless against parliamentary rigor and state benevolence. In the domestic stage of production, cohesion among workers was not so necessary. But when the factory system was substituted for the handicraft system and workers with common interests were thrown together in the towns, they had every impulsion towards organization. They not only felt the need of sociability after long hours spent in spiritless toil but they were impelled by a new consciousness — the realization that an inevitable and profound change had come over their condition. They had ceased to be journeymen controlling in some measure their activities: they were now merely wage-earners. As the realization of

this adverse change came over them, they began to resent the unsanitary and burdensome conditions under which they were compelled to live and to work. So actual grievances were added to fear of what might happen, and in their common cause experience soon taught them unity of action. Parliament was petitioned, agitations were organized, sick-benefits were inaugurated, and when these methods failed, machinery was destroyed, factories were burned, and the strike became a common weapon of self-defense.

Though a few labor organizations can be traced as far back as 1700, their growth during the eighteenth century was slow and irregular. There was no unity in their methods, and they were known by many names, such as associations, unions, union societies, trade clubs, and trade societies. These societies had no legal status and their meetings were usually held in secret. And the Webbs in their *History of Trade Unionism* allude to the traditions of "the midnight meeting of patriots in the corner of the field, the buried box of records, the secret oath, the long terms of imprisonment of the leading officials." Some of these tales were unquestionably apocryphal, others were exaggerated by feverish repetition. But they indicate

the aversion with which the authorities looked upon these combinations.

There were two legal doctrines long invoked by the English courts against combined action — doctrines that became a heritage of the United States and have had a profound effect upon the labor movements in America. The first of these was the doctrine of conspiracy, a doctrine so ancient that its sources are obscure. It was the natural product of a government and of a time that looked askance at all combined action, fearing sedition, intrigue, and revolution. As far back as 1305 there was enacted a statute defining conspiracy and outlining the offense. It did not aim at any definite social class but embraced all persons who combined for a "malicious enterprise." Such an enterprise was the breaking of a law. So when Parliament passed acts regulating wages, conditions of employment, or prices of commodities, those who combined secretly or openly to circumvent the act, to raise wages or lower them, or to raise prices and curtail markets, at once fell under the ban of conspiracy. The law operated alike on conspiring employers and conniving employees.

The new class of employers during the early years of the machine age eagerly embraced the



doctrine of conspiracy. They readily brought under the legal definition the secret connivings of the wage-earners. Political conditions now also worked against the laboring class. The unrest in the colonies that culminated in the independence of America and the fury of the French Revolution combined to make kings and aristocracies wary of all organizations and associations of plain folk. And when we add to this the favor which the new employing class, the industrial masters, were able to extort from the governing class, because of their power over foreign trade and domestic finance, we can understand the compulsory laws at length declaring against all combinations of working men.

The second legal doctrine which Americans have inherited from England and which has played a leading rôle in labor controversies is the doctrine that declares unlawful all combinations in restraint of trade. Like its twin doctrine of conspiracy, it is of remote historical origin. One of the earliest uses, perhaps the first use, of the term by Parliament was in the statute of 1436 forbidding guilds and trading companies from adopting by-laws "in restraint of trade," and forbidding practices in price manipulations "for their own profit and to the common hurt of the people." This doctrine thus

early invoked, and repeatedly reasserted against combinations of traders and masters, was incorporated in the general statute of 1800 which declared all combinations of journeymen illegal. But in spite of legal doctrines, of innumerable laws and court decisions, strikes and combinations multiplied, and devices were found for evading statutory wages.

In 1824 an act of Parliament removed the general prohibition of combinations and accorded to workingmen the right to bargain collectively. Three men were responsible for this noteworthy reform, each one a new type in British politics. The first was Francis Place, a tailor who had taken active part in various strikes. He was secretary of the London Corresponding Society, a powerful labor union, which in 1795 had twenty branches in London. Most of the officers of this organization were at one time or another arrested, and some were kept in prison three years without a trial. Place, schooled in such experience, became a radical politician of great influence, a friend of Bentham, Owen, and the elder Mill. The second type of new reformer was represented by Joseph Hume, a physician who had accumulated wealth in the India Service, who had returned home to enter public life, and who was converted from Toryism to

Radicalism by a careful study of financial, political, and industrial problems. A great number of reform laws can be traced directly to his incredible activity during his thirty years in Parliament. The third leader was John R. McCulloch, an orthodox economist, a disciple of Adam Smith, for some years editor of *The Scotsman*, which was then a violently radical journal coöperating with the newly established *Edinburgh Review* in advocating sociological and political reforms.

Thus Great Britain, the mother country from which Americans have inherited so many institutions, laws, and traditions, passed in turn through the periods of extreme paternalism, glorified competition, and governmental antagonism to labor combinations, into what may be called the age of conciliation. And today the Labour Party in the House of Commons has shown itself strong enough to impose its programme upon the Liberals and, through this radical coalition, has achieved a power for the working man greater than even Francis Place or Thomas Carlyle ever hoped for.

## CHAPTER II

### FORMATIVE YEARS

AMERICA did not become a cisatlantic Britain, as some of the colonial adventurers had hoped. A wider destiny awaited her. Here were economic conditions which upset all notions of the fixity of class distinctions. Here was a continent of free land, luring the disaffected or disappointed artisan and enabling him to achieve economic independence. Hither streamed ceaselessly hordes of immigrants from Europe, constantly shifting the social equilibrium. Here the demand for labor was constant, except during the rare intervals of financial stagnation, and here the door of opportunity swung wide to the energetic and able artisan. The records of American industry are replete with names of prominent leaders who began at the apprentice's bench.

The old class distinctions brought from the home country, however, had survived for many years in

the primeval forests of Virginia and Maryland and even among the hills of New England. Indeed, until the Revolution and for some time thereafter, a man's clothes were the badge of his calling. The gentleman wore powdered queue and ruffled shirt; the workman, coarse buckskin breeches, ponderous shoes with brass buckles, and usually a leather apron, well greased to keep it pliable. Just before the Revolution the lot of the common laborer was not an enviable one. His house was rude and barren of comforts; his fare was coarse and without variety. His wage was two shillings a day, and prison — usually an indescribably filthy hole — awaited him the moment he ran into debt. The artisan fared somewhat better. He had spent, as a rule, seven years learning his trade, and his skill and energy demanded and generally received a reasonable return. The account books that have come down to us from colonial days show that his handiwork earned him a fair living. This, however, was before machinery had made inroads upon the product of cabinetmaker, tailor, shoemaker, locksmith, and silversmith, and when the main street of every village was picturesque with the signs of the crafts that maintained the decent independence of the community.

Such labor organizations as existed before the Revolution were limited to the skilled trades. In 1648 the coopers and the shoemakers of Boston were granted permission to organize guilds, which embraced both master and journeyman, and there were a few similar organizations in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. But these were not unions like those of today. "There are," says Richard T. Ely, "no traces of anything like a modern trades union in the colonial period of American history, and it is evident on reflection that there was little need, if any, of organization on the part of labor, at that time."<sup>1</sup>

A new epoch for labor came in with the Revolution. Within a decade wages rose fifty per cent, and John Jay in 1784 writes of the "wages of mechanics and laborers" as "very extravagant." Though the industries were small and depended on a local market within a circumscribed area of communication, they grew rapidly. The period following the Revolution is marked by considerable industrial restiveness and by the formation of many labor organizations, which were, however, benevolent or friendly societies rather than unions and were often incorporated by an act of the

<sup>1</sup> *The Labor Movement in America*, by Richard T. Ely (1905), p. 36.

legislature. In New York, between 1800 and 1810, twenty-four such societies were incorporated. Only in the larger cities were they composed of artisans of one trade, such as the New York Masons Society (1807) or the New York Society of Journeymen Shipwrights (1807). Elsewhere they included artisans of many trades, such as the Albany Mechanical Society (1801). In Philadelphia the cordwainers, printers, and hatters had societies. In Baltimore the tailors were the first to organize, and they conducted in 1795 one of the first strikes in America. Ten years later they struck again, and succeeded in raising their pay from seven shillings sixpence the job to eight shillings ninepence and "extras." At the same time the pay of unskilled labor was rising rapidly, for workers were scarce owing to the call of the merchant marine in those years of the rising splendor of the American sailing ship, and the lure of western lands. The wages of common laborers rose to a dollar and more a day.

There occurred in 1805 an important strike of the Philadelphia cordwainers. Theirs was one of the oldest labor organizations in the country, and it had conducted several successful strikes. This particular occasion, however, is significant, because



the strikers were tried for conspiracy in the mayor's court, with the result that they were found guilty and fined eight dollars each, with costs. As the court permitted both sides to tell their story in detail, a full report of the proceedings survives to give us, as it were, a photograph of the labor conditions of that time. The trial kindled a great deal of local animosity. A newspaper called the *Aurora* contained inflammatory accounts of the proceedings, and a pamphlet giving the records of the court was widely circulated. This pamphlet bore the significant legend, "It is better that the law be known and certain, than that it be right," and was dedicated to the Governor and General Assembly "with the hope of attracting their particular attention, at the next meeting of the legislature."

Another early instance of a strike occurred in New York City in 1809, when the cordwainers struck for higher wages and were haled before the mayor's court on the charge of conspiracy. The trial was postponed by Mayor DeWitt Clinton until after the pending municipal elections to avoid the risk of offending either side. When at length the strikers were brought to trial, the court-house was crowded with spectators, showing how keen was the public interest in the case. The jury's

verdict of "guilty," and the imposition of a fine of one dollar each and costs upon the defendants served but as a stimulus to the friends of the strikers to gather in a great mass meeting and protest against the verdict and the law that made it possible.

In 1821 the New York Typographical Society, which had been organized four years earlier by Peter Force, a labor leader of unusual energy, set a precedent for the vigorous and fearless career of its modern successor by calling a strike in the printing office of Thurlow Weed, the powerful politician, himself a member of the society, because he employed a "rat," as a nonunion worker was called. It should be noted, however, that the organizations of this early period were of a loose structure and scarcely comparable to the labor unions of today.

Sidney Smith, the brilliant contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*, propounded in 1820 certain questions which sum up the general conditions of American industry and art after nearly a half century of independence: "In the four quarters of the globe," he asked, "who reads an American book? or goes to an American play? or looks at an American picture or statue? What does the world

yet owe to American physicians or surgeons? What new substances have their chemists discovered? or what old ones have they analyzed? What new constellations have been discovered by the telescopes of Americans? What have they done in mathematics? Who drinks out of American glasses? or eats from American plates? or wears American coats or gowns? or sleeps in American blankets?"

These questions, which were quite pertinent, though conceived in an impertinent spirit, were being answered in America even while the witty Englishman was framing them. The water power of New England was being harnessed to cotton mills, woolen mills, and tanneries. Massachusetts in 1820 reported one hundred and sixty-one factories. New York had begun that marvelous growth which made the city, in the course of a few decades, the financial capital of a hemisphere. So rapidly were people flocking to New York, that houses had tenants long before they had windows and doors, and streets were lined with buildings before they had sewers, sidewalks, or pavements. New Jersey had well under way those manufactories of glassware, porcelains, carpets, and textiles which have since brought her great prosperity.

Philadelphia was the country's greatest weaving center, boasting four thousand craftsmen engaged in that industry. Even on the frontier, Pittsburgh and Cincinnati were emerging from "settlements" into manufacturing towns of importance. McMaster concludes his graphic summary of these years as follows: "In 1820 it was estimated that 200,000 persons and a capital of \$75,000,000 were employed in manufacturing. In 1825 the capital used had been expanded to \$160,000,000 and the number of workers to 2,000,000."<sup>1</sup>

The Industrial Revolution had set in. These new millions who hastened to answer the call of industry in the new land were largely composed of the poor of other lands. Thousands of them were paupers when they landed in America, their passage having been paid by those at home who wanted to get rid of them. Vast numbers settled down in the cities, in spite of the lure of the land. It was at this period that universal manhood suffrage was written into the constitutions of the older States, and a new electorate assumed the reins of power. Now the first labor representatives were sent to the legislatures and to Congress, and the older parties began eagerly bidding for the votes of the

<sup>1</sup> *History of the People of the United States* (1901), vol. v, p. 230.

humble. The decision of great questions fell to this new electorate. With the rise of industry came the demand for a protective tariff and for better transportation. State governments vied with each other, in thoughtless haste, in lending their credit to new turnpike and canal construction. And above all political issues loomed the Bank, the monopoly that became the laborer's bugaboo and Andrew Jackson's opportunity to rally to his side the newly enfranchised mechanics.

So the old days of semi-colonial composure were succeeded by the thrilling experiences that a new industrial prosperity thrusts upon a really democratic electorate. Little wonder that the labor union movement took the political by-path, seeking salvation in the promise of the politician and in the panacea of fatuous laws. Now there were to be discerned the beginnings of class solidarity among the working people. But the individual's chances to improve his situation were still very great and opportunity was still a golden word.

The harsh facts of the hour, however, soon began to call for united action. The cities were expanding with such eager haste that proper housing conditions were overlooked. Workingmen were obliged to live in wretched structures. Moreover, human

beings were still levied on for debt and imprisoned for default of payment. Children of less than sixteen years of age were working twelve or more hours a day, and if they received any education at all, it was usually in schools charitably called "ragged schools" or "poor schools," or "pauper schools." There was no adequate redress for the mechanic if his wages were in default, for lien laws had not yet found their way into the statute books. Militia service was oppressive, permitting only the rich to buy exemption. It was still considered an unlawful conspiracy to act in unison for an increase in pay or a lessening of working hours. By 1840 the pay of unskilled labor had dropped to about seventy-five cents a day in the overcrowded cities, and in the winter, in either city or country, many unskilled workers were glad to work for merely their board. The lot of women workers was especially pitiful. A seamstress by hard toil, working fifteen hours a day might stitch enough shirts to earn from seventy-two cents to a dollar and twelve cents a week. Skilled labor, while faring better in wages, shared with the unskilled in the universal working day which lasted from sun to sun. Such in brief were the conditions that brought home to the laboring masses that homogeneous

consciousness which alone makes a group powerful in a democracy.

The movement can most clearly be discerned in the cities. Philadelphia claims precedence as the home of the first Trades' Union. The master cordwainers had organized a society in 1792, and their journeymen had followed suit two years later. The experiences and vicissitudes of these shoemakers furnished a useful lesson to other tradesmen, many of whom were organized into unions. But they were isolated organizations, each one fighting its own battles. In 1827 the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations was formed. Of its significance John R. Commons says:

England is considered the home of trade-unionism, but the distinction belongs to Philadelphia. . . . The first trades' union in England was that of Manchester, organized in 1829, although there seems to have been an attempt to organize one in 1824. But the first one in America was the "Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations," organized in Philadelphia in 1827, two years earlier. The name came from Manchester, but the thing from Philadelphia. Neither union lasted long. The Manchester union lived two years, and the Philadelphia union one year. But the Manchester union died and the Philadelphia union metamorphosed into politics. Here again Philadelphia was the pioneer, for it called into being the first labor party. Not



only this, but through the Mechanics' Union Philadelphia started probably the first wage-earners' paper ever published — the *Mechanics Free Press* — antedating, in January, 1828, the first similar journal in England by two years.<sup>1</sup>

The union had its inception in the first general building strike called in America. In the summer of 1827 the carpenters struck for a ten-hour day. They were soon joined by the bricklayers, painters, and glaziers, and members of other trades. But the strike failed of its immediate object. A second effort to combine the various trades into one organization was made in 1833, when the Trades' Union of the City and County of Philadelphia, was formed. Three years later this union embraced some fifty societies with over ten thousand members. In June, 1835, this organization undertook what was probably the first successful general strike in America. It began among the cordwainers, spread to the workers in the building trades, and was presently joined in by cigarmakers, carters, saddlers and harness makers, smiths, plumbers, bakers, printers, and even by the unskilled workers on the docks. The strikers' demand for a ten-hour day received a great deal of support from the influential

<sup>1</sup> *Labor Organization and Labor Politics, 1827-37*; in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, February, 1907.

men in the community. After a mass meeting of citizens had adopted resolutions endorsing the demands of the union, the city council agreed to a ten-hour day for all municipal employees.

In 1833 the carpenters of New York City struck for an increase in wages. They were receiving a dollar thirty-seven and a half cents a day; they asked for a dollar and a half. They obtained the support of other workers, notably the tailors, printers, brushmakers, tobacconists, and masons, and succeeded in winning their strike in one month. The printers, who have always been alert and active in New York City, elated by the success of this coördinate effort, sent out a circular calling for a general convention of all the trades societies of the city. After a preliminary meeting in July, a mass meeting was held in December, at which there were present about four thousand persons representing twenty-one societies. The outcome of the meeting was the organization of the General Trades' Union of New York City.

It happened in the following year that Ely Moore of the Typographical Association and the first president of the new union, a powerful orator and a sagacious organizer, was elected to Congress on the Jackson ticket. He was backed by

Tammany Hall, always on the alert for winners, and was supported by the mechanics, artisans, and workingmen. He was the first man to take his seat in Washington as the avowed representative of labor.

The movement for a ten-hour day was now in full swing, and the years 1834-7 were full of strikes. The most spectacular of these struggles was the strike of the tailors of New York in 1836, in the course of which twenty strikers were arrested for conspiracy. After a spirited trial attended by throngs of spectators, the men were found guilty by a jury which took only thirty minutes for deliberation. The strikers were fined \$50 each, except the president of the society, who was fined \$150. After the trial there was held a mass meeting which was attended, according to the *Evening Post*, by twenty-seven thousand persons. Resolutions were passed declaring that "to all acts of tyranny and injustice, resistance is just and therefore necessary," and "that the construction given to the law in the case of the journeymen tailors is not only ridiculous and weak in practice but unjust in principle and subversive of the rights and liberties of American citizens." The town was placarded with "coffin" handbills, a practice not uncommon in those days.

Enclosed in a device representing a coffin were these words:

THE RICH AGAINST THE POOR!

Twenty of your brethren have been found guilty for presuming to resist a reduction in their wages! . . . Judge Edwards has charged . . . the Rich are the only judges of the wants of the poor. On Monday, June 6, 1836, the Freemen are to receive their sentence, to gratify the hellish appetites of aristocracy! . . . Go! Go! Go! Every Freeman, every Workingman, and hear the melancholy sound of the earth on the Coffin of Equality. Let the Court Room, the City-hall — yea, the whole Park, be filled with mourners! But remember, offer no violence to Judge Edwards! Bend meekly and receive the chains wherewith you are to be bound! Keep the peace! Above all things, keep the peace!

The *Evening Post* concludes a long account of the affair by calling attention to the fact that the Trades Union was not composed of “only foreigners.” “It is a low calculation when we estimate that two-thirds of the workingmen of the city, numbering several thousand persons, belong to it,” and that “it is controlled and supported by the great majority of our native born.”

The Boston Trades Union was organized in 1834 and started out with a great labor parade on the

Fourth of July, followed by a dinner served to a thousand persons in Faneuil Hall. This union was formed primarily to fight for the ten-hour day, and the leading crusaders were the house carpenters, the ship carpenters, and the masons. Similar unions presently sprang up in other cities, including Baltimore, Albany, Troy, Washington, Newark, Schenectady, New Brunswick, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and St. Louis. By 1835 all the larger centers of industry were familiar with the idea, and most of them with the practice, of the trades organizations of a community uniting for action.

The local unions were not unmindful of the need for wider action, either through a national union of all the organizations of a single trade, or through a union of all the different trades unions. Both courses of action were attempted. In 1834 the National Trades Union came into being and from that date held annual national conventions of all the trades until the panic of 1837 obliterated the movement. When the first convention was called, it was estimated that there were some 26,250 members of trades unions then in the United States. Of these 11,500 were in New York and its vicinity, 6000 in Philadelphia, 4000 in Boston, and 3500 in Baltimore. Meanwhile a movement was under

way to federate the unions of a single trade. In 1835 the cordwainers attending the National Trades Union formed a preliminary organization and called a national cordwainers' convention. This met in New York in March, 1836, and included forty-five delegates from New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Connecticut. In the fall of 1836 the comb-makers, the carpenters, the hand-loom weavers, and the printers likewise organized separate national unions or alliances, and several other trades made tentative efforts by correspondence to organize themselves in the same manner.

Before the dire year of 1837, there are, then, to be found the beginnings of most of the elements of modern labor organizations — benevolent societies and militant orders; political activities and trades activities; amalgamations of local societies of the same trades and of all trades; attempts at national organization on the part of both the local trades unions and of the local trade unions; a labor press to keep alive the interest of the workman; mass meetings, circulars, conventions, and appeals to arouse the interest of the public in the issues of the hour. The persistent demand of the workingmen was for a ten-hour day. Harriet Martineau, who

traveled extensively through the United States, remarked that all the strikes she heard of were on the question of hours, not wages. But there were nevertheless abundant strikes either to raise wages or to maintain them. There were, also, other fundamental questions in controversy which could not be settled by strikes, such as imprisonment for debt, lien and exemption and homestead laws, convict labor and slave labor, and universal education. Most of these issues have since that time been decided in favor of labor, and a new series of demands takes their place today. Yet as one reads the records of the early conspiracy cases or thumbs through the files of old periodicals, he learns that there is indeed nothing new under the sun and that, while perhaps the particular issues have changed, the general methods and the spirit of the contest remain the same.

The laborer believed then, as he does now, that his organization must be all-embracing. In those days also there were "scabs," often called "rats" or "dung." Places under ban were systematically picketed, and warnings like the following were sent out: "We would caution all strangers and others who profess the art of horseshoeing, that if they go to work for any employer under the above prices,



they must abide by the consequences." Usually the consequences were a fine imposed by the union, but sometimes they were more severe. Coercion by the union did not cease with the strike. Journeymen who were not members were pursued with assiduity and energy as soon as they entered a town and found work. The boycott was a method early used against prison labor. New York stonecutters agreed that they would not "either collectively or individually purchase any goods manufactured" by convicts and that they would not "countenance" any merchants who dealt in them; and employers who incurred the displeasure of organized labor were "nullified."

The use of the militia during strikes presented the same difficulties then as now. During the general strike in Philadelphia in 1835 there was considerable rowdyism, and Michel Chevalier, a keen observer of American life, wrote that "the militia looks on; the sheriff stands with folded hands." Nor was there any difference in the attitude of the laboring man towards unfavorable court decisions. In the tailors' strike in New York in 1836, for instance, twenty-seven thousand sympathizers assembled with bands and banners to protest against the jury's verdict, and after sentence had been

imposed upon the defendants, the lusty throng burned the judge in effigy.

Sabotage is a new word, but the practice itself is old. In 1835 the striking cabinet-makers in New York smashed thousands of dollars' worth of chairs, tables, and sofas that had been imported from France, and the newspapers observed the significant fact that the destroyers boasted in a foreign language that only American-made furniture should be sold in America. Houses were burned in Philadelphia because the contractors erecting them refused to grant the wages that were demanded. Vengeance was sometimes sought against new machinery that displaced hand labor. In June, 1835, a New York paper remarked that "it is well known that many of the most obstinate turn-outs among workingmen and many of the most violent and lawless proceedings have been excited for the purpose of destroying newly invented machinery." Such acts of wantonness, however, were few, even in those first tumultuous days of the thirties. Striking became in those days a sort of mania, and not a town that had a mill or shop was exempt. Men struck for "grog or death," for "Liberty, Equality, and the Rights of Man," and even for the right to smoke their pipes at work.

Strike benefits, too, were known in this early period. Strikers in New York received assistance from Philadelphia, and Boston strikers were similarly aided by both New York and Philadelphia. When the high cost of living threatened to deprive the wage-earner of half his income, bread riots occurred in the cities, and handbills circulated in New York bore the legend:

BREAD, MEAT, RENT, FUEL  
THEIR PRICES MUST COME DOWN

## CHAPTER III

### TRANSITION YEARS

WITH the panic of 1837 the mills were closed, thousands of unemployed workers were thrown upon private charity, and, in the long years of depression which followed, trade unionism suffered a temporary eclipse. It was a period of social unrest in which all sorts of philanthropic reforms were suggested and tried out. Measured by later events, it was a period of transition, of social awakening, of aspiration tempered by the bitter experience of failure.

In the previous decade Robert Owen, the distinguished English social reformer and philanthropist, had visited America and had begun in 1826 his famous colony at New Harmony, Indiana. His experiments at New Lanark, in England, had already made him known to working people the world over. Whatever may be said of his quaint attempts to reduce society to a common

denominator, it is certain that his arrival in America, at a time when people's minds were open to all sorts of economic suggestions, had a stimulating effect upon labor reforms and led, in the course of time, to the founding of some forty communistic colonies, most of them in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. "We are all a little wild here with numberless projects of social reform," wrote Emerson to Thomas Carlyle; "not a reading man but has the draft of a new community in his waistcoat pocket." One of these experiments, at Red Bank, New Jersey, lasted for thirteen years, and another, in Wisconsin, for six years. But most of them after a year or two gave up the struggle.

Of these failures, the best known is Brook Farm, an intellectual community founded in 1841 by George Ripley at West Roxbury, Massachusetts. Six years later the project was abandoned and is now remembered as an example of the futility of trying to leaven a world of realism by means of an atom of transcendental idealism. In a sense, however, Brook Farm typifies this period of transition. It was a time of vagaries and longings. People seemed to be conscious of the fact that a new social solidarity was dawning. It is not strange, therefore, that — while the railroads were feeling their

way from town to town and across the prairies, while water-power and steam-power were multiplying man's productivity, indicating that the old days were gone forever — many curious dreams of a new order of things should be dreamed, nor that among them some should be ridiculous, some fantastic, and some unworthy, nor that, as the futility of a universal social reform forced itself upon the dreamers, they merged the greater in the lesser, the general in the particular, and sought an outlet in espousing some specific cause or attacking some particular evil.

Those movements which had their inspiration in a genuine humanitarianism achieved great good. Now for the first time the blind, the deaf, the dumb, and the insane were made the object of social solicitude and communal care. The criminal, too, and the jail in which he was confined remained no longer utterly neglected. Men of the debtor class were freed from that medieval barbarism which gave the creditor the right to levy on the person of his debtor. Even the public schools were dragged out of their lethargy. When Horace Mann was appointed secretary of the newly created Massachusetts Board of Education in 1837, a new day dawned for American public schools.

While these and other substantial improvements were under way, the charlatan and the faddist were not without their opportunities or their votaries. Spirit rappings beguiled or awed the villagers; thousands of religious zealots in 1844 abandoned their vocations and, drawing on white robes, awaited expectantly the second coming of Christ: every cult from free love to celibate austerity found zealous followers; the "new woman" declared her independence in short hair and bloomers; people sought social salvation in new health codes, in vegetarian boarding-houses, and in physical culture clubs; and some pursued the way to perfection through sensual religious exercises.

In this seething *milieu*, this medley of practical humanitarianism and social fantasies, the labor movement was revived. In the forties, Thomas Mooney, an observant Irish traveler who had spent several years in the United States wrote as follows<sup>1</sup>:

The average value of a common uneducated labourer is eighty cents a day. Of educated or mechanical labour, one hundred twenty-five and two hundred cents a day; of female labour forty cents a day. Against meat, flour, vegetables, and groceries at

<sup>1</sup> *Nine Years in America* (1850), p. 22.



one-third less than they rate in Great Britain and Ireland; against clothing, house rent and fuel at about equal; against public taxes at about three-fourths less; and a certainty of employment, and a facility of acquiring homes and lands, and education for children, *a hundred to one greater*. The further you penetrate into the country, Patrick, the higher in general will you find the value of labour, and the cheaper the price of all kinds of living. . . . The food of the American farmer, mechanic or labourer is the best I believe enjoyed by any similar classes in the whole world. At every meal there is meat or fish or both; indeed I think the women, children, and sedentary classes eat too much meat for their own good health.

This highly optimistic picture, written by a sanguine observer from the land of greatest agrarian oppression, must be shaded by contrasting details. The truck system of payment, prevalent in mining regions and many factory towns, reduced the actual wage by almost one-half. In the cities, unskilled immigrants had so overcrowded the common labor market that competition had reduced them to a pitiable state. Hours of labor were generally long in the factories. As a rule only the skilled artisan had achieved the ten-hour day, and then only in isolated instances. Woman's labor was the poorest paid, and her condition was the most neglected. A visitor to Lowell in

1846 thus describes the conditions in an average factory of that town:

In Lowell live between seven and eight thousand young women, who are generally daughters of farmers of the different States of New England. Some of them are members of families that were rich the generation before. . . . The operatives work thirteen hours a day in the summer time, and from daylight to dark in the winter. At half-past four in the morning the factory bell rings and at five the girls must be in the mills. A clerk, placed as a watch, observes those who are a few minutes behind the time, and effectual means are taken to stimulate punctuality. . . . At seven the girls are allowed thirty minutes for breakfast, and at noon thirty minutes more for dinner, except during the first quarter of the year, when the time is extended to forty-five minutes. But within this time they must hurry to their boarding-houses and return to the factory. . . . At seven o'clock in the evening the factory bell sounds the close of the day's work.

It was under these conditions that the coöperative movement had its brief day of experiment. As early as 1828 the workmen of Philadelphia and Cincinnati had begun coöperative stores. The Philadelphia group were "fully persuaded," according to their constitution, "that nothing short of an entire change in the present regulation of trade and commerce will ever be permanently beneficial

to the productive part of the community." But their little shop survived competition for only a few months. The Cincinnati "Coöperative Magazine" was a sort of combination of store and shop, where various trades were taught, but it also soon disappeared.

In 1845 the New England Workingmen's Association organized a protective union for the purpose of obtaining for its members "steady and profitable employment" and of saving the retailer's profit for the purchaser. This movement had a high moral flavor. "The dollar was to us of minor importance; humanitarian and not mercenary were our motives," reported their committee on organization of industry. "We must proceed from combined stores to combined shops, from combined shops to combined homes, to joint ownership in God's earth, the foundation that our edifice must stand upon." In this ambitious spirit "they commenced business with a box of soap and half a chest of tea." In 1852 they had 167 branches, a capital of \$241,712.66, and a business of nearly \$2,000,000 a year.

In the meantime similar coöperative movements began elsewhere. The tailors of Boston struck for higher wages in 1850 and, after fourteen weeks of

futile struggle, decided that their salvation lay in coöperation rather than in trade unionism, which at best afforded only temporary relief. About seventy of them raised \$700 as a coöperative nest egg and netted a profit of \$510.60 the first year. In the same year the Philadelphia printers, disappointed at their failure to force a higher wage, organized a coöperative printing press.

The movement spread to New York, where a strike of the tailors was in progress. The strikers were addressed at a great mass meeting by Albert Brisbane, an ardent disciple of Fourier, the French social economist, and were told that they must do away with servitude to capital. "What we want to know," said Brisbane, "is how to change, peacefully, the system of today. The first great principle is combination." Another meeting was addressed by a German, a follower of Karl Marx, who uttered in his native tongue these words that sound like a modern I. W. W. prophet: "Many of us have fought for liberty in the fatherland. We came here because we were opposed, and what have we gained? Nothing but misery, hunger, and treading down. But we are in a free country and it is our fault if we do not get our rights. . . . Let those who strike eat; the rest starve. Butchers and

bakers must withhold supplies. Yes, they must all strike, and then the aristocrat will starve. We must have a revolution. We cannot submit any longer." The cry of "Revolution! Revolution!" was taken up by the throng.

In the midst of this agitation a New York branch of the New England Protective Union was organized as an attempt at peaceful revolution by coöperation. The New York Protective Union went a step farther than the New England Union. Its members established their own shops and so became their own employers. And in many other cities striking workmen and eager reformers joined hands in modest endeavors to change the face of things. The revolutionary movements of Europe at this period were having a seismic effect upon American labor. But all these attempts of the workingmen to tourney a rough world with a needle were foredoomed to failure. Lacking the essential business experience and the ability to coöperate, they were soon undone, and after a few years little more was heard of coöperation.

In the meantime another economic movement gained momentum under the leadership of George Henry Evans, who was a land reformer and may be called a precursor of Henry George. Evans

inaugurated a campaign for free farms to entice to the land the unprosperous toilers of the city. In spite of the vast areas of the public domain still unoccupied, the cities were growing denser and larger and filthier by reason of the multitudes from Ireland and other countries who preferred to cast themselves into the eager maw of factory towns rather than go out as agrarian pioneers. To such Evans and other agrarian reformers made their appeal. For example, a handbill distributed everywhere in 1846 asked:

Are you an American citizen? Then you are a joint-owner of the public lands. Why not take enough of your property to provide yourself a home? Why not vote yourself a farm?

Are you a party follower? Then you have long enough employed your vote to benefit scheming office seekers. Use it for once to benefit yourself: Vote yourself a farm.

Are you tired of slavery — of drudging for others — of poverty and its attendant miseries? Then, vote yourself a farm.

Would you free your country and the sons of toil everywhere from the heartless, irresponsible mastery of the aristocracy of avarice? . . . Then join with your neighbors to form a true American party . . . whose chief measures will be first to limit the quantity of land that any one may henceforth monopolize or inherit: and second to make the public lands free to

actual settlers only, each having the right to sell his improvements to any man not possessed of other lands.

“Vote yourself a farm” became a popular shibboleth and a part of the standard programme of organized labor. The donation of public lands to heads of families, on condition of occupancy and cultivation for a term of years, was proposed in bills repeatedly introduced in Congress. But the cry of opposition went up from the older States that they would be bled for the sake of the newer, that giving land to the landless was encouraging idleness and wantonness and spreading demoralization, and that Congress had no more power to give away land than it had to give away money. These arguments had their effect at the Capitol, and it was not until the new Republican party came into power pledged to “a complete and satisfactory homestead measure” that the Homestead Act of 1862 was placed on the statute books.

A characteristic manifestation of the humanitarian impulse of the forties was the support given to labor in its renewed demand for a ten-hour day. It has already been indicated how this movement started in the thirties, how its object was achieved by a few highly organized trades, and how it was interrupted in its progress by the panic of



1837. The agitation, however, to make the ten-hour day customary throughout the country was not long in coming back to life. In March, 1840, an executive order of President Van Buren declaring ten hours to be the working day for laborers and mechanics in government employ forced the issue upon private employers. The earliest concerted action, it would seem, arose in New England, where the New England Workingmen's Association, later called the Labor Reform League, carried on the crusade. In 1845 a committee appointed by the Massachusetts Legislature to investigate labor conditions affords the first instance on record of an American legislature concerning itself with the affairs of the labor world to the extent of ordering an official investigation. The committee examined a number of factory operatives, both men and women, visited a few of the mills, gathered some statistics, and made certain neutral and specious suggestions. They believed the remedy for such evils as they discovered lay not in legislation but "in the progressive improvement in art and science, in a higher appreciation of man's destiny, in a less love for money, and a more ardent love for social happiness and intellectual superiority."

The first ten-hour law was passed in 1847 by the New Hampshire Legislature. It provided that "ten hours of actual labor shall be taken to be a day's work, unless otherwise agreed to by the parties," and that no minor under fifteen years of age should be employed more than ten hours a day without the consent of parent or guardian. This was the unassuming beginning of a movement to have the hours of toil fixed by society rather than by contract. This law of New Hampshire, which was destined to have a widespread influence, was hailed by the workmen everywhere with delight; mass meetings and processions proclaimed it as a great victory; and only the conservatives prophesied the worthlessness of such legislation. Horace Greeley sympathetically dissected the bill. He had little faith, it is true, in legislative interference with private contracts. "But," he asks, "who can seriously doubt that it is the duty of the Commonwealth to see that the tender frames of its youth are not shattered by excessively protracted toil? . . . Will any one pretend that ten hours per day, especially at confining and monotonous avocations which tax at once the brain and the sinews are not quite enough for any child to labor statedly and steadily?" The consent of

guardian or parent he thought a fraud against the child that could be averted only by the positive command of the State specifically limiting the hours of child labor.

In the following year Pennsylvania enacted a law declaring ten hours a legal day in certain industries and forbidding children under twelve from working in cotton, woolen, silk, or flax mills. Children over fourteen, however, could, by special arrangement with parents or guardians, be compelled to work more than ten hours a day. "This act is very much of a humbug," commented Greeley, "but it will serve a good end. Those whom it was intended to put asleep will come back again before long, and, like *Oliver Twist*, 'want some more.'"

The ten-hour movement had thus achieved social recognition. It had the stanch support of such men as Wendell Phillips, Edward Everett, Horace Greeley, and other distinguished publicists and philanthropists. Public opinion was becoming so strong that both the Whigs and Democrats in their party platforms declared themselves in favor of the ten-hour day. When, in the summer of 1847, the British Parliament passed a ten-hour law, American unions sent congratulatory

messages to the British workmen. Gradually the various States followed the example of New Hampshire and Pennsylvania — New Jersey in 1851, Ohio in 1852, and Rhode Island in 1853 — and the “ten-hour system” was legally established.

But it was one thing to write a statute and another to enforce it. American laws were, after all, based upon the ancient Anglo-Saxon principle of private contract. A man could agree to work for as many hours as he chose, and each employer could drive his own bargain. The cotton mill owners of Allegheny City, for example, declared that they would be compelled to run their mills twelve hours a day. They would not, of course, employ children under twelve, although they felt deeply concerned for the widows who would thereby lose the wages of their children. But they must run on a twelve-hour schedule to meet competition from other States. So they attempted to make special contracts with each employee. The workmen objected to this and struck. Finally they compromised on a ten-hour day and a sixteen per cent reduction in wages. Such an arrangement became a common occurrence in the industrial world of the middle of the century.

In the meantime the factory system was rapidly

recruiting women workers, especially in the New England textile mills. Indeed, as early as 1825 "tailoresses" of New York and other cities had formed protective societies. In 1829 the mill girls of Dover, New Hampshire, caused a sensation by striking. Several hundred of them paraded the streets and, according to accounts, "fired off a lot of gunpowder." In 1836 the women workers in the Lowell factories struck for higher wages and later organized a Factory Girls' Association which included more than 2,500 members. It was aimed against the strict regimen of the boarding houses, which were owned and managed by the mills. "As our fathers resisted unto blood the lordly avarice of the British Ministry," cried the strikers, "so we, their daughters, never will wear the yoke which has been prepared for us."

In this vibrant atmosphere was born the powerful woman's labor union, the Female Labor Reform Association, later called the Lowell Female Industrial Reform and Mutual Aid Society. Lowell became the center of a far-reaching propaganda characterized by energy and a definite conception of what was wanted. The women joined in strikes, carried banners, sent delegates to the labor conventions, and were zealous in propaganda. It was

the women workers of Massachusetts who first forced the legislature to investigate labor conditions and who aroused public sentiment to a pitch that finally compelled the enactment of laws for the bettering of their conditions. When the mill owners in Massachusetts demanded in 1846 that their weavers tend four looms instead of three, the women promptly resolved that "we will not tend a fourth loom unless we receive the same pay per piece as on three. . . . This we most solemnly pledge ourselves to obtain."

In New York, in 1845, the Female Industry Association was organized at a large meeting held in the court house. It included "tailoresses, plain and coarse sewing, shirt makers, book-folders and stickers, capmakers, straw-workers, dress-makers, crimpers, fringe and lacemakers," and other trades open to women "who were like oppressed." The New York *Herald* reported "about 700 females generally of the most interesting age and appearance" in attendance. The president of the meeting unfolded a pitiable condition of affairs. She mentioned several employers by name who paid only from ten to eighteen cents a day, and she stated that, after acquiring skill in some of the trades and by working twelve

to fourteen hours a day, a woman might earn twenty-five cents a day! "How is it possible," she exclaimed, "that at such an income we can support ourselves decently and honestly?"

So we come to the fifties, when the rapid rise in the cost of living due to the influx of gold from the newly discovered California mines created new economic conditions. By 1853, the cost of living had risen so high that the length of the working day was quite forgotten because of the utter inadequacy of the wage to meet the new altitude of prices. Hotels issued statements that they were compelled to raise their rates for board from a dollar and a half to two dollars a day. Newspapers raised their advertising rates. Drinks went up from six cents to ten and twelve and a half cents. In Baltimore, the men in the Baltimore and Ohio Railway shops struck. They were followed by all the conductors, brakemen, and locomotive engineers. Machinists employed in other shops soon joined them, and the city's industries were virtually paralyzed. In New York nearly every industry was stopped by strikes. In Philadelphia, Boston, Pittsburgh, in cities large and small, the striking workmen made their demands known.

By this time thoughtful laborers had learned the



futility of programmes that attempted to reform society. They had watched the birth and death of many experiments. They had participated in short-lived coöperative stores and shops; they had listened to Owen's alluring words and had seen his World Convention meet and adjourn; had witnessed national reform associations, leagues, and industrial congresses issue their high-pitched resolutions; and had united on legislative candidates. And yet the old world wagged on in the old way. Wages and hours and working conditions could be changed, they had learned, only by coercion. This coercion could be applied, in general reforms, only by society, by stress of public opinion. But in concrete cases, in their own personal environment, the coercion had to be first applied by themselves. They had learned the lesson of letting the world in general go its way while they attended to their own business.

、 In the early fifties, then, a new species of union appears. It discards lofty phraseology and the attempt at world-reform and it becomes simply a trade union. It restricts its house-cleaning to its own shop, limits its demands to its trade, asks for a minimum wage and minimum hours, and lays out with considerable detail the conditions under

which its members will work. The weapons in its arsenal are not new — the strike and the boycott. Now that he has learned to distinguish essentials, the new trade unionist can bargain with his employer, and as a result trade agreements stipulating hours, wages, and conditions, take the place of the desultory and ineffective settlements which had hitherto issued from labor disputes. But it was not without foreboding that this development was witnessed by the adherents of the *status quo*. According to a magazine writer of 1853:

After prescribing the rate of remuneration many of the Trades' Unions go to enact laws for the government of the respective departments, to all of which the employer must assent. . . . The result even thus far is that there is found no limit to this species of encroachment. If workmen may dictate the hours and mode of service, and the number and description of hands to be employed, they may also regulate other items of the business with which their labor is connected. Thus we find that within a few days, in the city of New York, the longshoremen have taken by force from their several stations the horses and labor-saving gear used for delivering cargoes, it being part of their regulations not to allow of such competition.

The gravitation towards common action was felt over a wide area during this period. Some trades met in national convention to lay down

rules for their craft. One of the earliest national meetings was that of the carpet-weavers (1846) in New York City, when thirty-four delegates, representing over a thousand operatives, adopted rules and took steps to prevent a reduction in wages. The National Convention of Journeymen Printers met in 1850, and out of this emerged two years later an organization called the National Typographical Union, which ten years later still, on the admission of some Canadian unions, became the International Typographical Union of North America; and as such it flourishes today. In 1855 the Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association of North America was organized and in the following year the National Trade Association of Hat Finishers, the forerunner of the United Hatters of North America. In 1859 the Iron Molders' Union of North America began its aggressive career.

The conception of a national trade unity was now well formed; compactly organized national and local trade unions with very definite industrial aims were soon to take the place of ephemeral, loose-jointed associations with vast and vague ambitions. Early in this period a new impetus was given to organized labor by the historic decision of Chief Justice Shaw of Massachusetts in

a case<sup>1</sup> brought against seven bootmakers charged with conspiracy. Their offense consisted in attempting to induce all the workmen of a given shop to join the union and compel the master to employ only union men. The trial court found them guilty; but the Chief Justice decided that he did not "perceive that it is criminal for men to agree together to exercise their own acknowledged rights in such a manner as best to subserve their own interests." In order to show criminal conspiracy, therefore, on the part of a labor union, it was necessary to prove that either the intent or the method was criminal, for it was not a criminal offense to combine for the purpose of raising wages or bettering conditions or seeking to have all laborers join the union. The liberalizing influence of this decision upon labor law can hardly be over-estimated.

The period closed amidst general disturbances and forebodings, political and economic. In 1857 occurred a panic which thrust the problem of unemployment, on a vast scale, before the American consciousness. Instead of demanding higher wages, multitudes now cried for work. The marching masses, in New York, carried banners asking

<sup>1</sup> *Commonwealth vs. Hunt.*

for bread, while soldiers from Governor's Island and marines from the Navy Yard guarded the Custom House and the Sub-Treasury. From Philadelphia to New Orleans, from Boston to Chicago, came the same story of banks failing, railroads in bankruptcy, factories closing, idle and hungry throngs moving restlessly through the streets. In New York 40,000, in Lawrence 3500, in Philadelphia 20,000, were estimated to be out of work. Labor learned anew that its prosperity was inalienably identified with the well-being of industry and commerce; and society learned that hunger and idleness are the golden opportunity of the demagogue and agitator. The word "socialism" now appears more and more frequently in the daily press and always a synonym of destruction or of something to be feared. No sooner had business revived than the great shadow of internal strife was cast over the land, and for the duration of the Civil War the peril of the nation absorbed all the energies of the people.

## CHAPTER IV

### AMALGAMATION

AFTER Appomattox, every one seemed bent on finding a short cut to opulence. To foreign observers, the United States was then simply a scrambling mass of selfish units, for there seemed to be among the American people no disinterested group to balance accounts between the competing elements — no leisure class, living on secured incomes, mellowed by generations of travel, education, and reflection; no bureaucracy arbitrarily guiding the details of governmental routine; no aristocracy, born umpires of the doings of their underlings. All the manifold currents of life seemed swallowed up in the commercial maelstrom. By the standards of what happened in this season of exuberance and intense materialism, the American people were hastily judged by critics who failed to see that the period was but the prelude to a maturer national life.

It was a period of a remarkable industrial expansion. Then "plant" became a new word in the phraseology of the market place, denoting the enlarged factory or mill and suggesting the hardy perennial, each succeeding year putting forth new shoots from its side. The products of this seed-time are seen in the colossal industrial growths of today. Then it was that short railway lines began to be welded into "systems," that the railway builders began to strike out into the prairies and mountains of the West, and that partnerships began to be merged into corporations and corporations into trusts, ever reaching out for the greater markets. Meanwhile the inventive genius of America was responding to the call of the time. In 1877 Bell telephoned from Boston to Salem; two years later, Brush lighted by electricity the streets of San Francisco. In 1882 Edison was making incandescent electric lights for New York and operating his first electric car in Menlo Park, New Jersey.

All these developments created a new demand for capital. Where formerly a manufacturer had made products to order or for a small number of known customers, now he made on speculation, for a great number of unknown customers, taking



his risks in distant markets. Where formerly the banker had lent money on local security, now he gave credit to vast enterprises far away. New inventions or industrial processes brought on new speculations. This new demand for capital made necessary a new system of credits, which was erected at first, as the recurring panics disclosed, on sand, but gradually, through costly experience, on a more stable foundation.

The economic and industrial development of the time demanded not only new money and credit but new men. A new type of executive was wanted, and he soon appeared to satisfy the need. Neither a capitalist nor a merchant, he combined in some degree the functions of both, added to them the greater function of industrial manager, and received from great business concerns a high premium for his talent and foresight. This Captain of Industry, as he has been called, is the foremost figure of the period, the hero of the industrial drama.

But much of what is admirable in that generation of nation builders is obscured by the industrial anarchy which prevailed. Everybody was for himself — and the devil was busy harvesting the hindmost. There were “rate-wars,” “cut-rate sales,” secret intrigues, and rebates; and there were subterranean

passages — some, indeed, scarcely under the surface — to council chambers, executive mansions, and Congress. There were extreme fluctuations of industry: prosperity was either at a very high level or depression at a very low one. Prosperity would bring on an expansion of credits, a rise in prices, higher cost of living, strikes and boycotts for higher wages; then depression would follow with the shutdown and that most distressing of social diseases, unemployment. During the panic of 1873-74 many thousands of men marched the streets crying earnestly for work.

Between the panics, strikes became a part of the economic routine of the country. They were expected, just as pay days and legal holidays are expected. Now for the first time came strikes that can only be characterized as stupendous. They were not mere slight economic disturbances; they were veritable industrial earthquakes. In 1873 the coal miners of Pennsylvania, resenting the truck system and the miserable housing which the mine owners forced upon them, struck by the tens of thousands. In Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Maryland, Ohio, and New York strikes occurred in all sorts of industries. There were the usual parades and banners, some appealing, some insulting, and

all the while the militia guarded property. In July, 1877, the men of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad refused to submit to a fourth reduction in wages in seven years and struck. From Baltimore the resentment spread to Pennsylvania and culminated with riots in Pittsburgh. All the anthracite coal miners struck, followed by most of the bituminous miners of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The militia were impotent to subdue the mobs; Federal troops had to be sent by President Hayes into many of the States; and a proclamation by the President commanded all citizens to keep the peace. Thus was Federal authority introduced to bolster up the administrative weakness of the States, and the first step was taken on the road to industrial nationalization.

The turmoil had hardly subsided when, in 1880, new strikes broke out. In the long catalogue of the strikers of that year are found the ribbon weavers of Philadelphia, Paterson, and New York, the stablemen of New York, New Jersey, and San Francisco, the cotton yard workers of New Orleans, the cotton weavers of New England and New York, the stockyard employees of Chicago and Omaha, the potters of Green Point, Long Island, the puddlers of Johnstown and Columbia, Pennsylvania, the machinists

of Buffalo, the tailors of New York, and the shoemakers of Indiana. The year 1882 was scarcely less restive. But 1886 is marked in labor annals as "the year of the great uprising," when twice as many strikes as in any previous year were reported by the United States Commissioner of Labor, and when these strikes reached a tragic climax in the Chicago Haymarket riots.

It was during this feverish epoch that organized labor first entered the arena of national politics. When the policy as to the national currency became an issue, the lure of cheap money drew labor into an alliance in 1880 with the Greenbackers, whose mad cry added to the general unrest. In this, as in other fatuous pursuits, labor was only responding to the forces and the spirit of the hour. These have been called the years of amalgamation, but they were also the years of tumult, for, while amalgamation was achieved, discipline was not. Authority imposed from within was not sufficient to overcome the decentralizing forces, and just as big business had yet to learn by self-imposed discipline how to overcome the extremely individualistic tendencies which resulted in trade anarchy, so labor had yet to learn through discipline the lessons of self-restraint. Moreover, in the

sudden expansion and great enterprises of these days, labor even more than capital lost in stability. One great steadying influence, the old personal relation between master and servant, which prevailed during the days of handicraft and even of the small factory, had disappeared almost completely. Now labor was put up on the market — a heartless term descriptive of a condition from which human beings might be expected to react violently — and they did, for human nature refused to be an inert, marketable thing.

The labor market must expand with the trader's market. In 1860 there were about one and a third million wage-earners in the United States; in 1870 well over two million; in 1880 nearly two and three-quarters million; and in 1890 over four and a quarter million. The city sucked them in from the country; but by far the larger augmentation came from Europe; and the immigrant, normally optimistic, often untaught, sometimes sullen and filled with a destructive resentment, and always accustomed to low standards of living, added to the armies of labor his vast and complex bulk.

There were two paramount issues — wages and the hours of labor — to which all other issues were and always have been secondary. Wages tend

constantly to become inadequate when the standard of living is steadily rising, and they consequently require periodical readjustment. Hours of labor, of course, are not subject in the same degree to external conditions. But the tendency has always been toward a shorter day. In a previous chapter, the inception of the ten-hour movement was outlined. Presently there began the eight-hour movement. As early as 1842 the carpenters and caulkers of the Charleston Navy Yard achieved an eight-hour day; but 1863 may more properly be taken as the beginning of the movement. In this year societies were organized in Boston and its vicinity for the precise purpose of winning the eight-hour day, and soon afterwards a national Eight-Hour League was established with local leagues extending from New England to San Francisco and New Orleans.

This movement received an intelligible philosophy, and so a new vitality, from Ira Steward, a member of the Boston Machinists' and Blacksmiths' Union. Writing as a workingman for workmen, Steward found in the standard of living the true reason for a shorter workday. With beautiful simplicity he pointed out to the laboring man that the shorter period of labor would not mean

smaller pay, and to the employer that it would not mean a diminished output. On the contrary, it would be mutually beneficial, for the unwearied workman could produce as much in the shorter day as the wearied workman in the longer. "As long," Steward wrote, "as tired human hands do most of the world's hard work, the sentimental pretense of honoring and respecting the horny-handed toiler is as false and absurd as the idea that a solid foundation for a house can be made out of soap bubbles."

In 1865 Steward's pamphlet, *A Reduction of Hours and Increase of Wages*, was widely circulated by the Boston Labor Reform Association. It emphasized the value of leisure and its beneficial reflex effect upon both production and consumption. Gradually these well reasoned and conservatively expressed doctrines found champions such as Wendell Phillips, Henry Ward Beecher, and Horace Greeley to give them wider publicity and to impress them upon the public consciousness. In 1867 Illinois, Missouri, and New York passed eight-hour laws and Wisconsin declared eight hours a day's work for women and children. In 1868 Congress established an eight-hour day for public work. These were promising signs, though the



battle was still far from being won. The eight-hour day has at last received "the sanction of society" — to use the words of President Wilson in his message to Congress in 1916, when he called for action to avert a great railway strike. But to win that sanction required over half a century of popular agitation, discussion, and economic and political evolution.

Such, in brief, were the general business conditions of the country and the issues which engaged the energies of labor reformers during the period following the Civil War. Meanwhile great changes were made in labor organizations. Many of the old unions were reorganized, and numerous local amalgamations took place. Most of the organizations now took the form of secret societies whose initiations were marked with naïve formalism and whose routines were directed by a group of officers with royal titles and fortified by signs, passwords, and ritual. Some of these orders decorated the faithful with high-sounding degrees. The societies adopted fantastic names such as "The Supreme Mechanical Order of the Sun," "The Knights of St. Crispin," and "The Noble Order of the Knights of Labor," of which more presently.

Meanwhile, too, there was a growing desire to unify the workers of the country by some sort of national organization. The outcome was a notable Labor Congress held at Baltimore in August, 1866, which included all kinds of labor organizations and was attended by seventy-seven delegates from thirteen States. In the light of subsequent events its resolutions now seem conservative and constructive. This Congress believed that, "all reforms in the labor movement can only be effected by an intelligent, systematic effort of the industrial classes . . . through the trades organizations." Of strikes it declared that "they have been injudicious and ill-advised, the result of impulse rather than principle, . . . and we would therefore discountenance them except as a *dernier ressort*, and when all means for an amicable and honorable adjustment has been abandoned." It issued a cautious and carefully phrased *Address to the Workmen throughout the Country*, urging them to organize and assuring them that "the first thing to be accomplished before we can hope for any great results is the thorough organization of all the departments of labor."

The National Labor Union which resulted from this convention held seven Annual Congresses,

and its proceedings show a statesmanlike conservatism and avoid extreme radicalism. This organization, which at its high tide represented a membership of 640,000, in its brief existence was influential in three important matters: first, it pointed the way to national amalgamation and was thus a forerunner of more lasting efforts in this direction; secondly, it had a powerful influence in the eight-hour movement; and, thirdly, it was largely instrumental in establishing labor bureaus and in gathering statistics for the scientific study of labor questions. But the National Labor Union unfortunately went into politics; and politics proved its undoing. Upon affiliating with the Labor Reform party it dwindled rapidly, and after 1871 it disappeared entirely.

One of the typical organizations of the time was the Order of the Knights of St. Crispin, so named after the patron saint of the shoemakers, and accessible only to members of that craft. It was first conceived in 1864 by Newell Daniels, a shoemaker in Milford, Massachusetts, but no organization was effected until 1867, when the founder had moved to Milwaukee. The ritual and constitution he had prepared was accepted then by a group of seven shoemakers, and in four years

this insignificant mustard seed had grown into a great tree. The story is told by Frank K. Foster,<sup>1</sup> who says, speaking of the order in 1868: "It made and unmade politicians; it established a monthly journal; it started coöperative stores; it fought, often successfully, against threatened reductions of wages . . .; it became the undoubted foremost trade organization of the world." But within five years the order was rent by factionalism and in 1878 was acknowledged to be dead. It perished from various causes — partly because it failed to assimilate or imbue with its doctrines the thousands of workmen who subscribed to its rules and ritual, partly because of the jealousy and treachery which is the fruitage of sudden prosperity, partly because of failure to fulfill the fervent hopes of thousands who joined it as a prelude to the industrial millennium; but especially it failed to endure because it was founded on an economic principle which could not be imposed upon society. The rule which embraced this principle reads as follows: "No member of this Order shall teach, or aid in teaching, any fact or facts of boot or shoemaking, unless the lodge shall give permission by

<sup>1</sup> *The Labor Movement, the Problem of Today*, edited by George E. McNeill, Chapter VIII.

a three-fourths vote . . . provided that this article shall not be so construed as to prevent a father from teaching his own son. Provided also, that this article shall not be so construed as to hinder any member of this organization from learning any or all parts of the trade." The medieval craft guild could not so easily be revived in these days of rapid changes, when a new stitching machine replaced in a day a hundred workmen. And so the Knights of St. Crispin fell a victim to their own greed.

The Noble Order of the Knights of Labor, another of those societies of workingmen, was organized in November, 1869, by Uriah S. Stephens, a Philadelphia garment cutter, with the assistance of six fellow craftsmen. It has been said of Stephens that he was "a man of great force of character, a skilled mechanic, with the love of books which enabled him to pursue his studies during his apprenticeship, and feeling withal a strong affection for secret organizations, having been for many years connected with the Masonic Order." He was to have been educated for the ministry but, owing to financial reverses in his family, was obliged instead to learn a trade. Later he taught school for a few years, traveled extensively in

the West Indies, South America, and California, and became an accomplished public speaker and a diligent observer of social conditions.

Stephens and his six associates had witnessed the dissolution of the local garment cutters' union. They resolved that the new society should not be limited by the lines of their own trade but should embrace "all branches of honorable toil." Subsequently a rule was adopted stipulating that at least three-fourths of the membership of lodges must be wage-earners eighteen years of age. Moreover, "no one who either sells or makes a living, or any part of it, by the sale of intoxicating drinks either as manufacturer, dealer, or agent, or through any member of his family, can be admitted to membership in this order; and no lawyer, banker, professional gambler, or stock broker can be admitted." They chose their motto from Solon, the wisest of lawgivers: "That is the most perfect government in which an injury to one is the concern of all"; and they took their preamble from Burke, the most philosophical of statesmen: "When bad men combine, the good must associate, else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle."

The order was a secret society and for years

kept its name from the public. It was generally known as the "Five Stars," because of the five asterisks that represented its name in all public notices. While mysterious initials and secret ceremonies gratified the members, they aroused a corresponding antagonism, even fear, among the public, especially as the order grew to giant size. What were the potencies of a secret organization that had only to post a few mysterious words and symbols to gather hundreds of workingmen in their halls? And what plottings went on behind those locked and guarded doors? To allay public hostility secrecy was gradually removed and in 1881 was entirely abolished — not, however, without serious opposition from the older members.

The atmosphere of high idealism in which the order had been conceived continued to be fostered by Stephens, its founder and its first Grand Master Workman. He extolled justice, discountenanced violence, and pleaded for "the mutual development and moral elevation of mankind." His exhortations were free from that narrow class antagonism which frequently characterizes the utterances of labor. One of his associates, too, invoked the spirit of chivalry, of true knighthood, when he said that the old trade union had failed because "it



had failed to recognize the rights of man and looked only to the rights of tradesmen," that the labor movement needed "something that will develop more of charity, less of selfishness, more of generosity, less of stinginess and nearness, than the average society has yet disclosed to its members." Nor were these ideas and principles betrayed by Stephens's successor, Terence V. Powderly, who became Grand Master in 1879 and served during the years when the order attained its greatest power. Powderly, also, was a conservative idealist. His career may be regarded as a good example of the rise of many an American labor leader. He had been a poor boy. At thirteen he began work as a switchtender; at seventeen he was apprenticed as machinist; at nineteen he was active in a machinists' and blacksmiths' union. After working at his trade in various places, he at length settled in Scranton, Pennsylvania, and became one of the organizers of the Greenback Labor party. He was twice elected mayor of Scranton, and might have been elected for a third term had he not declined to serve, preferring to devote all his time to the society of which he was Grand Master. The obligations laid upon every member of the Knights of Labor were impressive:

Labor is noble and holy. To defend it from degradation; to divest it of the evils to body, mind and estate which ignorance and greed have imposed; to rescue the toiler from the grasp of the selfish — is a work worthy of the noblest and best of our race. In all the multifarious branches of trade capital has its combinations; and, whether intended or not, it crushes the manly hopes of labor and tramples poor humanity in the dust. We mean no conflict with legitimate enterprise, no antagonism to necessary capital; but men in their haste and greed, blinded by self-interests, overlook the interests of others and sometimes violate the rights of those they deem helpless. We mean to uphold the dignity of labor, to affirm the nobility of all who earn their bread by the sweat of their brows. We mean to create a healthy public opinion on the subject of labor (the only creator of values or capital) and the justice of its receiving a full, just share of the values or capital it has created. We shall, with all our strength, support laws made to harmonize the interests of labor and capital, for labor alone gives life and value to capital, and also those laws which tend to lighten the exhaustiveness of toil. To pause in his toil, to devote himself to his own interests, to gather a knowledge of the world's commerce, to unite, combine and coöperate in the great army of peace and industry, to nourish and cherish, build and develop the temple he lives in is the highest and noblest duty of man to himself, to his fellow men and to his Creator.

The phenomenal growth and collapse of the Knights of Labor is one of the outstanding events

in American economic history. The membership in 1869 consisted of eleven tailors. This small beginning grew into the famous Assembly No. 1. Soon the ship carpenters wanted to join, and Assembly No. 2 was organized. The shawl-weavers formed another assembly, the carpet-weavers another, and so on, until over twenty assemblies, covering almost every trade, had been organized in Philadelphia alone. By 1875 there were eighty assemblies in the city and its vicinity. As the number of lodges multiplied, it became necessary to establish a common agency or authority, and a Committee on the Good of the Order was constituted to represent all the local units, but this committee was soon superseded by a delegate body known as the District Assembly. As the movement spread from city to city and from State to State, a General Assembly was created in 1878 to hold annual conventions and to be the supreme authority of the order. In 1883 the membership of the order was 52,000; within three years, it had mounted to over 700,000; and at the climax of its career the society boasted over 1,000,000 workmen in the United States and Canada who had vowed fealty to its knighthood.

It is not to be imagined that every member

of this vast horde so suddenly brought together understood the obligations of the workman's chivalry. The selfish and the lawless rushed in with the prudent and sincere. But a resolution of the executive board to stop the initiation of new members came too late. The undesirable and radical element in many communities gained control of local assemblies, and the conservatism and intelligence of the national leaders became merely a shield for the rowdy and the ignorant who brought the entire order into popular disfavor.

The crisis came in 1886. In the early months of this turbulent year there were nearly five hundred labor disputes, most of them involving an advance in wages. An epidemic of strikes then spread over the country, many of them actually conducted by the Knights of Labor and all of them associated in the public mind with that order. One of the most important of these occurred on the Southwestern Railroad. In the preceding year, the Knights had increased their lodges in St. Louis from five to thirty, and these were under the domination of a coarse and ruthless district leader. When in February, 1886, a mechanic, working in the shops of the Texas and Pacific Railroad at Marshall, Texas, was discharged

for cause and the road refused to reinstate him, a strike ensued which spread over the entire six thousand miles of the Gould system; and St. Louis became the center of the tumult. After nearly two months of violence, the outbreak ended in the complete collapse of the strikers. This result was doubly damaging to the Knights of Labor, for they had officially taken charge of the strike and were censured on the one hand for their conduct of the struggle and on the other for the defeat which they had sustained.

In the same year, against the earnest advice of the national leaders of the Knights of Labor, the employees of the Third Avenue Railway in New York began a strike which lasted many months and which was characterized by such violence that policemen were detailed to guard every car leaving the barns. In Chicago the freight handlers struck, and some 60,000 workmen stopped work in sympathy. On the 3d of May, at the McCormick Harvester Works, several strikers were wounded in a tussle with the police. On the following day a mass meeting held in Haymarket Square, Chicago, was harangued by a number of anarchists. When the police attempted to disperse the mob, guns were fired at the officers of the law and a bomb

was hurled into their throng, killing seven and wounding sixty. For this crime seven anarchists were indicted, found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged. The Knights of Labor passed resolutions asking clemency for these murderers and thereby grossly offended public opinion, and that at a time when public opinion was frightened by these outrages, angered by the disclosures of brazen plotting, and upset by the sudden consciousness that the immunity of the United States from the red terror of Europe was at an end.

Powderly and the more conservative national officers who were opposed to these radical machinations were strong enough in the Grand Lodge in the following year to suppress a vote of sympathy for the condemned anarchists. The radicals thereupon seceded from the organization. This outcome, however, did not restore the order to the confidence of the public, and its strength now rapidly declined. A loss of 300,000 members for the year 1888 was reported. Early in the nineties, financial troubles compelled the sale of the Philadelphia headquarters of the Knights of Labor and the removal to more modest quarters in Washington. A remnant of members still retain an organization, but it is barely a shadow of the vast army of

Knights who at one time so hopefully carried on a crusade in every center of industry. It was not merely the excesses of the lawless but the multiplicity of strikes which alienated public sympathy. Powderly's repeated warnings that strikes, in and of themselves, were destructive of the stable position of labor were shown to be prophetic.

These excesses, however, were forcing upon the public the idea that it too had not only an interest but a right and a duty in labor disputes. Methods of arbitration and conciliation were now discussed in every legislature. In 1883 the House of Representatives established a standing committee on labor. In 1884 a national Bureau of Labor was created to gather statistical information. In 1886 President Cleveland sent to Congress a message which has become historic as the first presidential message devoted to labor. In this he proposed the creation of a board of labor commissioners who should act as official arbiters in labor disputes, but Congress was unwilling at that time to take so advanced a step. In 1888, however, it enacted a law providing for the settlement of railway labor disputes by arbitration, upon agreement of both parties.

Arbitration signifies a judicial attitude of mind, a



judgment based on facts. These facts are derived from specific conditions and do not grow out of broad generalizations. Arbitral tribunals are created to decide points in dispute, not philosophies of human action. The businesslike organization of the new trade union could as readily adapt itself to arbitration as it had already adapted itself, in isolated instances, to collective bargaining. A new stage had therefore been reached in the labor movement.

## CHAPTER V

### FEDERATION

EXPERIENCE and events had now paved the way for that vast centralization of industry which characterizes the business world of the present era. The terms sugar, coffee, steel, tobacco, oil, acquire on the stock exchange a new and precise meaning. Seventy-five per cent of steel, eighty-three per cent of petroleum, ninety per cent of sugar production are brought under the control of industrial combinations. Nearly one-fourth of the wage-earners of America are employed by great corporations. But while financiers are talking only in terms of millions, while super-organization is reaching its eager fingers into every industry, and while the units of business are becoming national in scope, the workingman himself is being taught at last to rely more and more upon group action in his endeavor to obtain better wages and working conditions. He is taught also to widen the area of

his organization and to intensify its efforts. So, while the public reads in the daily and periodical press about the oil trust and the coffee trust, it is also being admonished against a labor trust and against two personages, both symbols of colossal economic unrest — the promoter, or the stalking horse of financial enterprise, and the walking delegate, or the labor union representative and only too frequently the advance agent of bitterness and revenge.

In response to the call of the hour there appeared the American Federation of Labor, frequently called in these later days the labor trust. The Federation was first suggested at Terre Haute, Indiana, on August 2, 1881, at a convention called by the Knights of Industry and the Amalgamated Labor Union, two secret societies patterned after the model common at that period. The Amalgamated Union was composed largely of disaffected Knights of Labor, and the avowed purpose of the Convention was to organize a new secret society to supplant the Knights. But the trades union element predominated and held up the British Trades Union and its powerful annual congress as a model. At this meeting the needs of intensive local organization, of trades autonomy, and of comprehensive

team work were foreseen, and from the discussion there grew a plan for a second convention. With this meeting, which was held at Pittsburgh in November, 1881, the actual work of the new association began under the name, "The Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States of America and Canada."

When this Federation learned that a convention representing independent trade unions was called to meet in Columbus, Ohio, in December, 1886, it promptly altered its arrangements for its own annual session so that it, too, met at the same time and place. Thereupon the Federation effected a union with this independent body, which represented twenty-five organizations. The new organization was called the American Federation of Labor. Until 1889, this was considered as the first annual meeting of the new organization, but in that year the Federation resolved that its "continuity . . . be recognized and dated from the year 1881."

For some years the membership increased slowly; but in 1889 over 70,000 new members were reported, in 1900 over 200,000, and from that time the Federation has given evidence of such growth and prosperity that it easily is the most powerful

labor organization America has known, and it takes its place by the side of the British Trades Union Congress as "the sovereign organization in the trade union world." In 1917 its membership reached 2,371,434, with 110 affiliated national unions, representing virtually every element of American industry excepting the railway brotherhoods and a dissenting group of electrical workers.

The foundation of this vast organization was the interest of particular trades rather than the interests of labor in general. Its membership is made up "of such Trade and Labor Unions as shall conform to its rules and regulations." The preamble of the Constitution states: "We therefore declare ourselves in favor of the formation of a thorough federation, embracing every trade and labor organization in America under the Trade Union System of organization." The Knights of Labor had endeavored to subordinate the parts to the whole; the American Federation is willing to bend the whole to the needs of the unit. It zealously sends out its organizers to form local unions and has made provision that "any seven wage workers of good character following any trade or calling" can establish a local union with federal affiliations.

This vast and potent organization is based upon

the principle of trade homogeneity — namely, that each trade is primarily interested in its own particular affairs but that all trades are interested in those general matters which affect all laboring men as a class. To combine effectually these dual interests, the Federation espouses the principle of home rule in purely local matters and of federal supervision in all general matters. It combines, with a great singleness of purpose, so diverse a variety of details that it touches the minutiae of every trade and places at the disposal of the humblest craftsman or laborer the tremendous powers of its national influence. While highly centralized in organization, it is nevertheless democratic in operation, depending generally upon the referendum for its sanctions. It is flexible in its parts and can mobilize both its heavy artillery and its cavalry with equal readiness. It has from the first been managed with skill, energy, and great adroitness.

The supreme authority of the American Federation is its Annual Convention composed of delegates chosen from national and international unions, from state, central, and local trade unions, and from fraternal organizations. Experience has evolved a few simple rules by which the convention is safeguarded against political and factional

debate and against the interruptions of "sore-heads." Besides attending to the necessary routine, the Convention elects the eleven national officers who form the executive council which guides the administrative details of the organization. The funds of the Federation are derived from a per capita tax on the membership. The official organ is the *American Federationist*. It is interesting to note in passing that over two hundred and forty labor periodicals together with a continual stream of circulars and pamphlets issue from the trades union press.

The Federation is divided into five departments, representing the most important groups of labor: the Building Trades, the Metal Trades, Mining, Railroad Employees, and the Union Label Trades.<sup>1</sup> Each of these departments has its own autonomous sphere of action, its own set of officers, its own financial arrangements, its own administrative details. Each holds an annual convention, in the same place and week, as the Federation. Each is made up of affiliated unions only and confines itself solely to the interest of its own trades. This sub-organization serves as an admirable clearing house

<sup>1</sup> There is in the Federation, however, a group of unions not affiliated with any of these departments.



and shock-absorber and succeeds in eliminating much of the friction which occurs between the several unions.

There are also forty-three state branches of the Federation, each with its own separate organization. There are annual state conventions whose membership, however, is not always restricted to unions affiliated with the American Federation. Some of these state organizations antedate the Federation.

There remain the local unions, into personal touch with which each member comes. There were in 1916 as many as 647 "city centrals," the term used to designate the affiliation of the unions of a city. The city centrals are smaller replicas of the state federations and are made up of delegates elected by the individual unions. They meet at stated intervals and freely discuss questions relating to the welfare of organized labor in general as well as to local labor conditions in every trade. Indeed, vigilance seems to be the watchword of the Central. Organization, wages, trade agreements, and the attitude of public officials and city councils which even remotely might affect labor rarely escape their scrutiny. This oldest of all the groups of labor organizations remains the most vital part of the Federation.

The success of the American Federation of Labor is due in large measure to the crafty generalship of its President, Samuel Gompers, one of the most astute labor leaders developed by American economic conditions. He helped organize the Federation, carefully nursed it through its tender years, and boldly and unhesitatingly used its great power in the days of its maturity. In fact, in a very real sense the Federation is Gompers, and Gompers is the Federation. Born in London of Dutch-Jewish lineage, on January 27, 1850, the son of a cigar-maker, Samuel Gompers was early apprenticed to that craft. At the age of thirteen he went to New York City, where in the following year he joined the first cigar-makers' union organized in that city. He enlisted all his boyish ardor in the cause of the trade union and, after he arrived at maturity, was elected successively secretary and president of his union. The local unions were, at that time, gingerly feeling their way towards state and national organization, and in these early attempts young Gompers was active. In 1887, he was one of the delegates to a national meeting which constituted the nucleus of what is now the Cigar-makers' International Union.

The local cigar-makers' union in which Gompers

received his necessary preliminary training was one of the most enlightened and compactly organized groups of American labor. It was one of the first American Unions to adopt in an efficient manner the British system of benefits in the case of sickness, death, or unemployment. It is one of the few American unions that persistently encourages skill in its craft and intelligence in its membership. It has been a pioneer in collective bargaining and in arbitration. It has been conservatively and yet enthusiastically led and has generally succeeded in enlisting the respect and coöperation of employers. This union has been the kindergarten and preparatory school of Samuel Gompers, who, during all the years of his wide activities as the head of the Federation of Labor, has retained his membership in his old local and has acted as first vice-president of the Cigar-makers' International. These early experiences, precedents, and enthusiasms Gompers carried with him into the Federation of Labor. He was one of the original group of trade union representatives who organized the Federation in 1881. In the following year he was its President. Since 1885 he has, with the exception of a single year, been annually chosen as President. During the first years the Federation

was very weak, and it was even doubtful if the organization could survive the bitter hostility of the powerful Knights of Labor. It could pay its President no salary and could barely meet his expense account.<sup>1</sup> Gompers played a large part in the complete reorganization of the Federation in 1886. He subsequently received a yearly salary of \$1000 so that he could devote all of his time to the cause. From this year forward the growth of the Federation was steady and healthy. In the last decade it has been phenomenal. The earlier policy of caution has, however, not been discarded—for caution is the word that most aptly describes the methods of Gompers. From the first, he tested every step carefully, like a wary mountaineer, before he urged his organization to follow. From the beginning Gompers has followed three general lines of policy. First, he has built the imposing structure of his Federation upon the autonomy of the constituent unions. This is the secret of the united enthusiasm of the Federation. It is the Anglo-Saxon instinct for home rule applied to trade union politics. In the tentative years of its early struggles, the Federation could hope for survival only upon the suffrance of the trade union, and

<sup>1</sup> In one of the early years this was \$13.

today, when the Federation has become powerful, its potencies rest upon the same foundation.

Secondly, Gompers has always advocated frugality in money matters. (His Federation is powerful but not rich. Its demands upon the resources of the trade unions have always been moderate, and the salaries paid have been modest.<sup>1</sup> When the Federation erected a new building for its headquarters in Washington a few years ago, it symbolized in its architecture and equipment this modest yet adequate and substantial financial policy. American labor unions have not yet achieved the opulence, ambitions, and splendors of the guilds of the Middle Ages and do not yet direct their activities from splendid guild halls.

In the third place, Gompers has always insisted upon the democratic methods of debate and referendum in reaching important decisions. However arbitrary and intolerant his impulses may have been, and however dogmatic and narrow his conclusions in regard to the relation of labor to society and towards the employer (and his Dutch inheritance gives him great obstinacy), he has

<sup>1</sup> Before 1899 the annual income of the Federation was less than \$25,000; in 1901 it reached the \$100,000 mark; and since 1903 it has exceeded \$200,000.

astutely refrained from too obviously bossing his own organization.

With this sagacity of leadership Gompers has combined a fearlessness that sometimes verges on brazenness. He has never hesitated to enter a contest when it seemed prudent to him to do so. He crossed swords with Theodore Roosevelt on more than one occasion and with President Eliot of Harvard in a historic newspaper controversy over trade union exclusiveness. He has not been daunted by conventions, commissions, courts, congresses, or public opinion. During the long term of his Federation presidency, which is unparalleled in labor history and alone is conclusive evidence of his executive skill, scarcely a year has passed without some dramatic incident to cast the searchlight of publicity upon him — a court decision, a congressional inquiry, a grand jury inquisition, a great strike, a nation-wide boycott, a debate with noted public men, a political maneuver, or a foreign pilgrimage. Whenever a constituent union in the Federation has been the object of attack, he has jumped into the fray and has rarely emerged humiliated from the encounter. This is the more surprising when one recalls that he possesses the limitations of the zealot and the dogmatism of the partisan.

One of the most important functions of Gompers has been that of national lobbyist for the Federation. He was one of the earliest champions of the eight-hour day and the Saturday half-holiday. He has energetically espoused Federal child labor legislation, the restriction of immigration, alien contract labor laws, and employers' liability laws. He advocated the creation of a Federal Department of Labor which has recently developed into a cabinet secretariat. His *légale bête noire*, however, was the Sherman Anti-Trust Law as applied to labor unions. For many years he fought vehemently for an amending act exempting the laboring class from the rigors of that famous statute. President Roosevelt with characteristic candor told a delegation of Federation officials who called on him to enlist his sympathy in their attempt, that he would enforce the law impartially against law-breakers, rich and poor alike. Roosevelt recommended to Congress the passage of an amendment exempting "combinations existing for and engaged in the promotion of innocent and proper purposes." An exempting bill was passed by Congress but was vetoed by President Taft on the ground that it was class legislation. Finally, during President Wilson's administration, the Federation



accomplished its purpose, first indirectly by a rider on an appropriation bill, then directly by the Clayton Act, which specifically declared labor combinations, instituted for the "purpose of mutual help and . . . not conducted for profit," not to be in restraint of trade. Both measures were signed by the President. Encouraged by their success, the Federation leaders have moved with a renewed energy against the other legal citadel of their antagonists, the use of the injunction in strike cases.

Gompers has thus been the political watchman of the labor interests. Nothing pertaining, even remotely, to labor conditions escapes the vigilance of his Washington office. During President Wilson's administration, Gompers's influence achieved a power second to none in the political field, owing partly to the political power of the labor vote which he ingeniously marshalled, partly to the natural inclination of the dominant political party, and partly to the strategic position of labor in the war industries.

The Great War put an unprecedented strain upon the American Federation of Labor. In every center of industry laborers of foreign birth early showed their racial sympathies, and under

the stimuli of the intriguing German and Austrian ambassadors sinister plots for crippling munitions plants and the shipping industries were hatched everywhere. Moreover, workingmen became restive under the burden of increasing prices, and strikes for higher wages occurred almost daily.

At the beginning of the War, the officers of the Federation maintained a calm and neutral attitude which increased in vigilance as the strain upon American patience and credulity increased. As soon as the United States declared war, the whole energies of the officials of the Federation were cast into the national cause. In 1917, under the leadership of Gompers, and as a practical antidote to the I. W. W. and the foreign labor and pacifist organization known as The People's Council, there was organized The American Alliance for Labor and Democracy in order "to Americanize the labor movement." Its campaign at once became nation wide. Enthusiastic meetings were held in the great manufacturing centers, stimulated to enthusiasm by the incisive eloquence of Gompers. At the annual convention of the Federation held in Buffalo in November, 1917, full endorsement was given to the Alliance by a vote of 21,602 to 402. In its formal statement the Alliance

declared: "It is our purpose to try, by educational methods, to bring about a more American spirit in the labor movement, so that what is now the clear expression of the vast majority may become the conviction of all. Where we find ignorance, we shall educate. Where we find something worse, we shall have to deal as the situation demands. But we are going to leave no stone unturned to put a stop to anti-American activities among workers." And in this patriotic effort the Alliance was successful.

This was the first great step taken by Gompers and the Federation. The second was equally important. With characteristic energy the organization put forward a programme for the readjustment of labor to war conditions. "This is labor's war" declared the manifesto issued by the Federation. "It must be won by labor, and every stage in the fighting and the final victory must be made to count for humanity." These aims were embodied in constructive suggestions adopted by the Council of National Defense appointed by President Wilson. This programme was in a large measure the work of Gompers, who was a member of the Council. The following outline shows the comprehensive nature of the view which the laborer took of

the relation between task and the War. The plan embraced:

1. Means for furnishing an adequate supply of labor to war industries.

This included: (a) A system of labor exchanges. (b) The training of workers. (c) Agencies for determining priorities in labor demands. (d) Agencies for the dilution of skilled labor.

2. Machinery for adjusting disputes between capital and labor, without stoppage of work.

3. Machinery for safeguarding conditions of labor, including industrial hygiene, safety appliances, etc.

4. Machinery for safeguarding conditions of living, including housing, etc.

5. Machinery for gathering data necessary for effective executive action.

6. Machinery for developing sound public sentiment and an exchange of information between the various departments of labor administration, the numerous industrial plants, and the public, so as to facilitate the carrying out of a national labor programme.

Having thus first laid the foundations of a national labor policy and having, in the second place, developed an effective means of Americanizing, as

far as possible, the various labor groups, the Federation took another step. As a third essential element in uniting labor to help to win the war, it turned its attention to the inter-allied solidarity of workingmen. In the late summer and autumn of 1917, Gompers headed an American labor mission to Europe and visited England, Belgium, France, and Italy. His frequent public utterances in numerous cities received particular attention in the leading European newspapers and were eagerly read in the allied countries. The pacifist group of the British Labour Party did not relish his outspokenness on the necessity of completely defeating the Teutons before peace overtures could be made. On the other hand, some of the ultraconservative papers misconstrued his sentiments on the terms which should be exacted from the enemy when victory was assured. This misunderstanding led to an acrid international newspaper controversy, to which Gompers finally replied: "I uttered no sentence or word which by the wildest imagination could be interpreted as advocating the formula 'no annexations, and no indemnities.' On the contrary, I have declared, both in the United States and in conferences and public meetings while abroad, that the German forces must be

driven back from the invaded territory before even peace terms could be discussed, that Alsace-Lorraine should be returned to France, that the 'Irredente' should be returned to Italy, and that the imperialistic militarist machine which has so outraged the conscience of the world must be made to feel the indignation and righteous wrath of all liberty and peace loving peoples." This mission had a deep effect in uniting the labor populations of the allied countries and especially in cheering the over-wrought workers of Britain and France, and it succeeded in laying the foundation for a more lasting international labor solidarity.

This considerable achievement was recognized when the Peace Conference at Paris formed a Commission on International Labor Legislation. Gompers was selected as one of the American representatives and was chosen chairman. While the Commission was busy with its tasks, an international labor conference was held at Berne. Gompers and his colleagues, however, refused to attend this conference. They gave as their reasons for this aloofness the facts that delegates from the Central powers, with whom the United States was still at war, were in attendance; that the meeting was held "for the purpose of arranging socialist procedure of an

international character"; and that the convention was irregularly called, for it had been announced as an inter-allied conference but had been surreptitiously converted into an international pacifist gathering, conniving with German and Austrian socialists.

Probably the most far-reaching achievement of Gompers is the by no means inconsiderable contribution he has made to that portion of the treaty of peace with Germany relating to the international organization of labor. This is an entirely new departure in the history of labor, for it attempts to provide international machinery for stabilizing conditions of labor in the various signatory countries. On the ground that "the well-being, physical and moral, of the industrial wage-earners is of supreme international importance," the treaty lays down guiding principles to be followed by the various countries, subject to such changes as variations in climate, customs, and economic conditions dictate. These principles are as follows: labor shall not be regarded merely as a commodity or an article of commerce; employers and employees shall have the right of forming associations; a wage adequate to maintain a reasonable standard of living shall be paid; an eight-hour day shall be adopted; a weekly day of rest



shall be allowed; child labor shall be abolished and provision shall be made for the education of youth; men and women shall receive equal pay for equal work; equitable treatment shall be accorded to all workers, including aliens resident in foreign lands; and an adequate system of inspection shall be provided in which women should take part.

While these international adjustments were taking place, the American Federation began to anticipate the problems of the inevitable national labor readjustment after the war. Through a committee appointed for that purpose, it prepared an ample programme of reconstruction in which the basic features are the greater participation of labor in shaping its environment, both in the factory and in the community, the development of coöperative enterprise, public ownership or regulation of public utilities, strict supervision of corporations, restriction of immigration, and the development of public education. The programme ends by declaring that "the trade union movement is unalterably and emphatically opposed . . . to a large standing army."

During the entire period of the war, both at home and abroad, Gompers fought the pacifist and the socialist elements in the labor movement. At

the same time he was ever vigilant in pushing forward the claims of trade unionism and was always beforehand in constructive suggestions. His life has spanned the period of great industrial expansion in America. He has had the satisfaction of seeing his Federation grow under his leadership at first into a national and then into an international force. Gompers is an orthodox trade unionist of the British School. Bolshevism is to him a synonym for social ruin. He believes that capital and labor should coöperate but that capital should cease to be the predominant factor in the equation. In order to secure this balance he believes labor must unite and fight, and to this end he has devoted himself to the federation of American trade unions and to their battle. He has steadfastly refused political preferment and has declined many alluring offers to enter private business. In action he is an opportunist — a shrewd, calculating captain, whose knowledge of human frailties stands him in good stead, and whose personal acquaintance with hundreds of leaders of labor, of finance, and of politics, all over the country, has given him an unusual opportunity to use his influence for the advancement of the cause of labor in the turbulent field of economic warfare.

The American Federation of Labor has been forced by the increasing complexity of modern industrial life to recede somewhat from its early trade union isolation. This broadening point of view is shown first in the recognition of the man of no trade, the unskilled worker. For years the skilled trades monopolized the Federation and would not condescend to interest themselves in their humble brethren. The whole mechanism of the Federation in the earlier period revolved around the organization of the skilled laborers. In England the great dockers' strike of 1889 and in America the lurid flare of the I. W. W. activities forced the labor aristocrat to abandon his pharisaic attitude and to take an interest in the welfare of the unskilled. The future will test the stability of the Federation, for it is among the unskilled that radical and revolutionary movements find their first recruits.

A further change in the internal policy of the Federation is indicated by the present tendency towards amalgamating the various allied trades into one union. For instance, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and the Amalgamated Wood Workers' Association, composed largely of furniture makers and machine wood workers,

combined a few years ago and then proceeded to absorb the Wooden Box Makers, and the Wood Workers in the shipbuilding industry. The general secretary of the new amalgamation said that the organization looked "forward with pleasurable anticipations to the day when it can truly be said that all men of the wood-working craft on this continent hold allegiance to the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America." A similar unification has taken place in the lumbering industry. When the shingle weavers formed an international union some fifteen years ago, they limited the membership "to the men employed in skilled departments of the shingle trade." In 1912 the American Federation of Labor sanctioned a plan for including in one organization all the workers in the lumber industry, both skilled and unskilled. This is a far cry from the minute trade autocracy taught by the orthodox unionist thirty years ago.

Today the Federation of Labor is one of the most imposing organizations in the social system of America. It reaches the workers in every trade. Every contributor to the physical necessities of our materialistic civilization has felt the far-reaching influence of confederated power. A sense of its

strength pervades the Federation. Like a healthy, self-conscious giant, it stalks apace among our national organizations. Through its cautious yet pronounced policy, through its seeking after definite results and excluding all economic vagaries, it bids fair to overcome the disputes that disturb it from within and the onslaughts of Socialism and of Bolshevism that threaten it from without.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE TRADE UNION

THE trade union<sup>1</sup> forms the foundation upon which the whole edifice of the American Federation of Labor is built. Like the Federation, each particular trade union has a tripartite structure: there is first the national body called the Union, the International, the General Union, or the Grand Lodge; there is secondly the district division or council, which is merely a convenient general union in miniature; and finally there is the local individual union, usually called "the local." Some unions, such as the United Mine Workers, have a fourth division or subdistrict, but this is not the general practice.

The sovereign authority of a trade union is its general convention, a delegate body meeting at stated times. Some unions meet annually, some

<sup>1</sup> The term "trade union" is used here in its popular sense, embracing labor, trade, and industrial unions, unless otherwise specified.

biennially, some triennially, and a few determine by referendum when the convention is to meet. Sometimes a long interval elapses: the granite cutters, for instance, held no convention between 1880 and 1912, and the cigar-makers, after a convention in 1896, did not meet for sixteen years. The initiative and referendum are, in some of the more compact unions, taking the place of the general convention, while the small executive council insures promptness of administrative action.

The convention elects the general officers. Of these the president is the most conspicuous, for he is the field marshal of the forces and fills a large place in the public eye when a great strike is called. It was in this capacity that John Mitchell rose to sudden eminence during the historic anthracite strike in 1902, and George W. Perkins of the cigar-makers' union achieved his remarkable hold upon the laboring people. As the duties of the president of a union have increased, it has become the custom to elect numerous vice-presidents to relieve him. Each of these has certain specific functions to perform, but all remain the president's aides. One, for instance, may be the financier, another the strike agent, another the organizer, another the agitator. With such a group of virtual specialists



around a chieftain, a union has the immense advantage of centralized command and of highly organized leadership. The tendency, especially among the more conservative unions, is to reëlect these officers year after year. The president of the Carpenters' Union held his office for twenty years, and John Mitchell served the miners as president ten years. Under the immediate supervision of the president, an executive board composed of all the officers guides the destinies of the union. When this board is not occupied with the relations of the men to their employers, it gives its judicial consideration to the more delicate and more difficult questions of inter-union comity and of local differences.

The local union is the oldest labor organization, and a few existing locals can trace their origin as far back as the decade preceding the Civil War. Many more antedate the organization of the Federation. Not a few of these almost historic local unions have refused to surrender their complete independence by affiliating with those of recent origin, but they have remained merely isolated independent locals with very little general influence. The vast majority of local unions are members of the national trades union and of the Federation.

The local union is the place where the laborer comes into direct personal contact with this powerful entity that has become such a factor in his daily life. Here he can satisfy that longing for the recognition of his point of view denied him in the great factory and here he can meet men of similar condition, on terms of equality, to discuss freely and without fear the topics that interest him most. There is an immense psychic potency in this intimate association of fellow workers, especially in some of the older unions which have accumulated a tradition.

It is in the local union that the real life of the labor organization must be nourished, and the statesmanship of the national leaders is directed to maintaining the greatest degree of local autonomy consistent with the interests of national homogeneity. The individual laborer thus finds himself a member of a group of his fellows with whom he is personally acquainted, who elect their own officers, to a large measure fix their own dues, transact their own routine business, discipline their own members, and whenever possible make their own terms of employment with their employers. The local unions are obliged to pay their tithe into the greater treasury, to make stated reports, to appoint a

certain roster of committees, and in certain small matters to conform to the requirements of the national union. On the whole, however, they are independent little democracies confederated, with others of their kind, by means of district and national organizations.

The unions representing the different trades vary in structure and spirit. There is an immense difference between the temper of the tumultuous structural iron workers and the contemplative cigar-makers, who often hire one of their number to read to them while engaged in their work, the favorite authors being in many instances Ruskin and Carlyle. Some unions are more successful than others in collective bargaining. Martin Fox, the able leader of the iron moulders, signed one of the first trade agreements in America and fixed the tradition for his union; and the shoemakers, as well as most of the older unions are fairly well accustomed to collective bargaining. In matters of discipline, too, the unions vary. Printers and certain of the more skilled trades find it easier to enforce their regulations than do the longshoremen and unions composed of casual foreign laborers. In size also the unions of the different trades vary. In 1910 three had a membership of over 100,000

each. Of these the United Mine Workers reached a total of 370,800, probably the largest trades union in the world. The majority of the unions have a membership between 1000 and 10,000, the average for the entire number being 5000; but the membership fluctuates from year to year, according to the conditions of labor, and is usually larger in seasons of contest. Fluctuation in membership is most evident in the newer unions and in the unskilled trades. The various unions differ also in resources. In some, especially those composed largely of foreigners, the treasury is chronically empty; yet at the other extreme the mine workers distributed \$1,890,000 in strike benefits in 1902 and had \$750,000 left when the board of arbitration sent the workers back into the mines.

The efforts of the unions to adjust themselves to the quickly changing conditions of modern industry are not always successful. Old trade lines are constantly shifting, creating the most perplexing problem of inter-union amity. Over two score jurisdictional controversies appear for settlement at each annual convention of the American Federation. The Association of Longshoremen and the Seamen's Union, for example, both claim jurisdiction over employees in marine warehouses. The

cigar-makers and the stogie-makers have also long been at swords' points. Who shall have control over the coopers who work in breweries — the Brewery Workers or the Coopers' Union? Who shall adjust the machinery in elevators — the Machinists or Elevator Constructors? Is the operator of a linotype machine a typesetter? So plasterers and carpenters, blacksmiths and structural iron workers, printing pressmen and plate engravers, hod carriers and cement workers, are at loggerheads; the electrification of a railway creates a jurisdictional problem between the electrical railway employees and the locomotive engineers; and the marble workers and the plasterers quarrel as to the setting of imitation marble. These quarrels regarding the claims of rival unions reveal the weakness of the Federation as an arbitral body. There is no centralized authority to impose a standard or principle which could lead to the settlement of such disputes. Trade jealousy has overcome the suggestions of the peacemakers that either the nature of the tools used, or the nature of the operation, or the character of the establishment be taken as the basis of settlement.

When the Federation itself fails as a peacemaker, it cannot be expected that locals will escape these

controversies. There are many examples, often ludicrous, of petty jealousies and trade rivalries. The man who tried to build a brick house, employing union bricklayers to lay the brick and union painters to paint the brick walls, found to his loss that such painting was considered a bricklayer's job by the bricklayers' union, who charged a higher wage than the painters would have done. It would have relieved him to have the two unions amalgamate. And this in general has become a real way out of the difficulty. For instance, a dispute between the Steam and Hot Water Fitters and the Plumbers was settled by an amalgamation called the United Association of Journeymen Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters, and Steam Fitters' Helpers, which is now affiliated with the Federation. But the International Association of Steam, Hot Water, and Power Pipe Fitters and Helpers is not affiliated, and inter-union war results. The older unions, however, have a stabilizing influence upon the newer, and a genuine conservatism such as characterizes the British unions is becoming more apparent as age solidifies custom and lends respect to by-laws and constitutions. But even time cannot obviate the seismic effects of new inventions, and shifts in jurisdictional matters are

always imminent. The dominant policy of the trade union is to keep its feet on the earth, no matter where its head may be, to take one step at a time, and not to trouble about the future of society. This purpose, which has from the first been the prompter of union activity, was clearly enunciated in the testimony of Adolph Strasser, a converted socialist, one of the leading trade unionists, and president of the Cigar-makers' Union, before a Senate Committee in 1883:

Chairman: You are seeking to improve home matters first?

Witness: Yes sir, I look first to the trade I represent: I look first to cigars, to the interests of men who employ me to represent their interests.

Chairman: I was only asking you in regard to your ultimate ends.

Witness: We have no ultimate ends. We are going on from day to day. We are fighting only for immediate objects — objects that can be realized in a few years.

Chairman: You want something better to eat and to wear, and better houses to live in?

Witness: Yes, we want to dress better and to live better, and become better citizens generally.

Chairman: I see that you are a little sensitive lest it should be thought that you are a mere



theorizer. I do not look upon you in that light at all.

Witness: Well, we say in our constitution that we are opposed to theorists, and I have to represent the organization here. We are all practical men.

This remains substantially the trade union platform today. Trade unionists all aim to be "practical men."

The trade union has been the training school for the labor leader, that comparatively new and increasingly important personage who is a product of modern industrial society. Possessed of natural aptitudes, he usually passes by a process of logical evolution, through the important committees and offices of his local into the wider sphere of the national union, where as president or secretary, he assumes the leadership of his group. Circumstances and conditions impose a heavy burden upon him, and his tasks call for a variety of gifts. Because some particular leader lacked tact or a sense of justice or some similar quality, many a labor maneuver has failed, and many a labor organization has suffered in the public esteem. No other class relies so much upon wise leadership as does the laboring class. The average wage-earner is

without experience in confronting a new situation or trained and superior minds. From his tasks he has learned only the routine of his craft. When he is faced with the necessity of prompt action, he is therefore obliged to depend upon his chosen captains for results.

In America these leaders have risen from the rank and file of labor. Their education is limited. The great majority have only a primary schooling. Many have supplemented this meager stock of learning by rather wide but desultory reading and by keen observation. A few have read law, and some have attended night schools. But all have graduated from the University of Life. Many of them have passed through the bitterest poverty, and all have been raised among toilers and from infancy have learned to sympathize with the toiler's point of view.<sup>1</sup> They are therefore by training and origin distinctly leaders of a class, with the outlook

<sup>1</sup> A well-known labor leader once said to the writer: "No matter how much you go around among laboring people, you will never really understand us unless you were brought up among us. There is a real gulf between your way of looking on life and ours. You can be only an investigator or an intellectual sympathizer with my people. But you cannot really understand our viewpoint." Whatever of misconception there may be in this attitude, it nevertheless marks the actual temper of the average wage-earner, in spite of the fact that in America many employers have risen from the ranks of labor.

upon life, the prejudices, the limitations, and the fervent hopes of that class.

In a very real sense the American labor leader is the counterpart of the American business man — intensively trained, averse to vagaries, knowing thoroughly one thing and only one thing, and caring very little for anything else.

This comparative restriction of outlook marks a sharp distinction between American and British labor leaders. In Britain such leadership is a distinct career for which a young man prepares himself. He is usually fairly well educated, for not frequently he started out to study for the law or the ministry and was sidetracked by hard necessity. A few have come into the field from journalism. As a result, the British labor leader has a certain veneer of learning and puts on a more impressive front than the American. For example, Britain has produced Ramsey MacDonald, who writes books and makes speeches with a rare grace: John Burns, who quotes Shakespeare or recites history with wonderful fluency: Keir Hardie, a miner from the ranks, who was possessed of a charming poetic fancy: Philip Snowden, who displays the spiritual qualities of a seer; and John Henderson, who combines philosophical power with skill in dialectics.

On the other hand, the rank and file of American labor is more intelligent and alert than that of British labor, and the American labor leader possesses a greater capacity for intensive growth and is perhaps a better specialist at rough and tumble fighting and bargaining than his British colleague.<sup>1</sup>

In a very real sense every trade union is typified by some aggressive personality. The Granite Cutters' National Union was brought into active being in 1877 largely through the instrumentality of James Duncan, a rugged fighter who, having federated the locals, set out to establish an eight-hour day through collective bargaining and to settle disputes by arbitration. He succeeded in forming a well-disciplined force out of the members of his craft, and even the employers did not escape the touch of his rod.

The Glassblowers' Union was saved from disruption by Dennis Hayes, who, as president of the national union, reorganized the entire force in the years 1896-99, unionized a dozen of the largest

<sup>1</sup> The writer recalls spending a day in one of the Midland manufacturing towns with the secretary of a local coöperative society, a man who was steeped in Bergson's philosophy and talked on local botany and geology as fluently as on local labor conditions. It would be difficult to duplicate this experience in America.

glass producing plants in the United States and succeeded in raising the wages fifteen per cent. He introduced methods of arbitration and collective agreements and established a successful system of insurance.

James O'Connell, the president of the International Association of Machinists, led his organization safely through the panic of 1893, reorganized it upon a broader basis, and introduced sick benefits. In 1901 after a long and wearisome dickering with the National Metal Trades Association, a shorter day was agreed upon, but, as the employers would not agree to a ten-hour wage for a nine-hour day, O'Connell led his men out on a general strike and won.

Thomas Kidd, secretary of the Wood-Workers' International Union, was largely responsible for the agreement made with the manufacturers in 1897 for the establishment of a minimum wage of fifteen cents an hour for a ten-hour day, a considerable advance over the average wage paid up to that time. Kidd was the object of severe attacks in various localities, and in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, where labor riots took place for the enforcement of the Union demands, he was arrested for conspiracy but acquitted by the trial jury.

When the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers lost their strike at Homestead, Pennsylvania, in 1892, the union was thought to be dead. It was quietly regvanized into activity, however, by Theodore Schaffer, who has displayed adroitness in managing its affairs in the face of tremendous opposition from the great steel manufacturers who refuse to permit their shops to be unionized.

The International Typographical Union, composed of an unusually intelligent body of men, owes its singular success in collective contracting largely to James M. Lynch, its national president. The great newspapers did not give in to the demands of the union without a series of struggles in which Lynch manipulated his forces with skill and tact. Today this is one of the most powerful unions in the country.

Entirely different was the material out of which D. J. Keefe formed his Union of Longshoremen, Marine and Transport Workers. His was a mass of unskilled workers, composed of many nationalities accustomed to rough conditions, and not easily led. Keefe, as president of their International Union, has had more difficulty in restraining his men and in teaching them the obligations of a contract than

any other leader. At least on one occasion he employed non-union men to carry out the agreement which his recalcitrant following had made and broken.

The evolution of an American labor leader is shown at its best in the career of John Mitchell, easily the most influential trade unionist of this generation. He was born on February 4, 1870, on an Illinois farm, but at two years of age he lost his mother and at four his father. With other lads of his neighborhood he shared the meager privileges of the school terms that did not interfere with farm work. At thirteen he was in the coal mines in Braidwood, Illinois, and at sixteen he was the outer doorkeeper in the local lodge of the Knights of Labor. Eager to see the world, he now began a period of wandering, working his way from State to State. So he traversed the Far West and the Southwest, alert in observing social conditions and coming in contact with many types of men. These wanderings stood him in lieu of an academic course, and when he returned to the coal fields of Illinois he was ready to settle down. From his Irish parentage he inherited a genial personality and a gift of speech. These traits, combined with his continual reading on economic and sociological



subjects, soon lifted him into local leadership. He became president of the village school board and of the local lodge of the Knights of Labor. He joined the United Mine Workers of America upon its organization in 1890. He rose rapidly in its ranks, was a delegate to the district and sub-district conventions, secretary-treasurer of the Illinois district, chairman of the Illinois legislative committee, member of the executive board, and national organizer. In January, 1898, he was elected national vice-president, and in the following autumn, upon the resignation of the president, he became acting president. The national convention in 1899 chose him as president, a position which he held for ten years. He has served as one of the vice-presidents of the American Federation of Labor since 1898, was for some years chairman of the Trade Agreement Department of the National Civic Federation and has held the position of Chairman of the New York State Industrial Commission.

When he rose to the leadership of the United Mine Workers, this union had only 43,000 members, confined almost exclusively to the bituminous regions of the West.<sup>1</sup> Within the decade of his

<sup>1</sup>Less than 10,000 out of 140,000 anthracite miners were members of the union.

presidency he brought virtually all the miners of the United States under his leadership. Wherever his union went, there followed sooner or later the eight-hour day, raises in wages of from thirteen to twenty-five per cent, periodical joint conventions with the operators for settling wage scales and other points in dispute, and a spirit of prosperity that theretofore was unknown among the miners.

In unionizing the anthracite miners, Mitchell had his historic fight with the group of powerful corporations that owned the mines and the railways which fed them. This great strike, one of the most significant in our history, attracted universal attention because of the issues involved, because a coal shortage threatened many Eastern cities, and because of the direct intervention of President Roosevelt. The central figure of this gigantic struggle was the miners' young leader, barely thirty years old, with the features of a scholar and the demeanor of an ascetic, marshaling his forces with the strategic skill of a veteran general.

At the beginning of the strike Mitchell, as president of the Union, announced that the miners were eager to submit all their grievances to an impartial arbitral tribunal and to abide by its decisions. The ruthless and prompt refusal of the mine owners

to consider this proposal reacted powerfully in the strikers' favor among the public. As the long weeks of the struggle wore on, increasing daily in bitterness, multiplying the apprehension of the strikers and the restiveness of the coal consumers, Mitchell bore the increasing strain with his customary calmness and self-control.

After the parties had been deadlocked for many weeks, President Roosevelt called the mine owners and the union leaders to a conference in the White House. Of Mitchell's bearing, the President afterwards remarked: "There was only one man in the room who behaved like a gentleman, and that man was not I."

The Board of Arbitration eventually laid the blame on both sides but gave the miners the bulk of their demands. The public regarded the victory as a Mitchell victory, and the unions adored the leader who had won their first strike in a quarter of a century, and who had won universal confidence by his ability and demeanor in the midst of the most harassing tensions of a class war.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mitchell was cross-examined for three days when he was testifying before the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission. Every weapon which craft, prejudice, and skill could marshal against him failed to ruffle his temper or to lead him into damaging admissions or contradictions.

John Mitchell's powerful hold upon public opinion today is not alone due to his superior intelligence, his self-possession, his business skill, nor his Irish gift of human accommodation, but to the greater facts that he was always aware of the grave responsibilities of leadership, that he realized the stern obligation of a business contract, and that he always followed the trade union policy of asking only for that which was attainable. Soon after the Anthracite strike he wrote:

I am opposed to strikes as I am opposed to war. As yet, however, the world with all its progress has not made war impossible: neither, I fear, considering the nature of men and their institutions, will the strike entirely disappear for years to come. . . .

This strike has taught both capital and labor that they owe certain obligations to society and that their obligations must be discharged in good faith. If both are fair and conciliatory, if both recognize the moral restraint of the state of society by which they are surrounded, there need be few strikes. They can, and it is better that they should, settle their differences between themselves. . . .

Since labor organizations are here, and here to stay, the managers of employing corporations must choose what they are to do with them. They may have the union as a present, active, and unrecognized force, possessing influence for good or evil, but without direct responsibility; or they may deal with it, give it

responsibility as well as power, define and regulate that power, and make the union an auxiliary in the promotion of stability and discipline and the amicable adjustment of all local disputes.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE RAILWAY BROTHERHOODS

THE solidarity and statesmanship of the trade unions reached perfection in the railway "Brotherhoods." Of these the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers<sup>1</sup> is the oldest and most powerful. It grew out of the union of several early associations; one of these was the National Protective Association formed after the great Baltimore and Ohio strike in 1854; another was the Brotherhood of the Footboard, organized in Detroit after the bitter strike on the Michigan Central in 1862. Though born thus of industrial strife, this railroad union has nevertheless developed a poise and a conservatism which have been its greatest assets in the

<sup>1</sup> Up to this time the Brotherhoods have not affiliated with the Knights of Labor nor with the American Federation of Labor. After the passage of the eight-hour law by Congress in 1916, definite steps were taken towards affiliating the Railway Brotherhoods with the Federation, and at its annual convention in 1919 the Federation voted to grant them a charter.

numercus controversies engaging its energies. No other union has had a more continuous and hard-headed leadership, and no other has won more universal respect both from the public and from the employer.

This high position is largely due, no doubt, to the fact that the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers is composed of a very select and intelligent class of men. Every engineer must first serve an apprenticeship as a fireman, which usually lasts from four to twelve years. Very few are advanced to the rank of engineer in less than four years. The firemen themselves are selected men who must pass several physical examinations and then submit to the test of as arduous an apprenticeship as modern industrialism affords. In the course of an eight- to twelve-hour run firemen must shovel from fifteen to twenty-five tons of coal into the blazing fire box of a locomotive. In winter they are constantly subjected to hot blasts from the furnace and freezing drafts from the wind. Records show that out of every hundred who begin as firemen only seventeen become engineers and of these only six ever become passenger engineers. The mere strain on the eyes caused by looking into the coal blaze eliminates 17 per cent. Those who eventually



become engineers are therefore a select group as far as physique is concerned.

The constant dangers accompanying their daily work require railroad engineers to be no less dependable from the moral point of view. The history of railroading is as replete with heroism as is the story of any war. A coward cannot long survive at the throttle. The process of natural selection which the daily labor of an engineer involves the Brotherhood has supplemented by most rigid moral tests. The character of every applicant for membership is thoroughly scrutinized and must be vouched for by three members. He must demonstrate his skill and prove his character by a year's probation before his application is finally voted upon. Once within the fold, the rules governing his conduct are inexorable. If he shuns his financial obligations or is guilty of a moral lapse, he is summarily expelled. In 1909, thirty-six members were expelled for "unbecoming conduct." Drunkards are particularly dangerous in railroading. When the order was only five years old and still struggling for its life, it nevertheless expelled 172 members for drunkenness. In proven cases of this sort the railway authorities are notified, the offending engineer is dismissed from the service, and the

shame of these culprits is published to the world in the *Locomotive Engineers' Journal*, which reaches every member of the order. There is probably no other club or professional organization so exacting in its demands that its members be self-respecting, faithful, law-abiding, and capable; and surely no other is so summary and far-reaching in its punishments.

Today ninety per cent of all the locomotive engineers in the United States and Canada belong to this union. But the Brotherhood early learned the lesson of exclusion. In 1864 after very annoying experiences with firemen and other railway employees on the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne and Chicago Railroad, it amended its constitution and excluded firemen and machinists from the order. This exclusive policy, however, is based upon the stern requirements of professional excellence and is not displayed towards engineers who are not members of the Brotherhood. Towards them there is displayed the greatest toleration and none of the narrow spirit of the "closed shop." The non-union engineer is not only tolerated but is even on occasion made the beneficiary of the activities of the union. He shares, for example, in the rise of wages and readjustment of runs. There are

even cases on record where the railroad unions have taken up a specific grievance between a non-union man and his employer and have attempted a readjustment.

From the inception of the Brotherhood, the policy of the order towards the employing railroad company has been one of business and not of sentiment. The Brotherhood has held that the relation between the employer and employee concerning wages, hours, conditions of labor, and settlement of difficulties should be on the basis of a written contract; that the engineer as an individual was at a manifest disadvantage in making such a contract with a railway company; that he therefore had a right to join with his fellow engineers in pressing his demands and therefore had the right to a collective contract. Though for over a decade the railways fought stubbornly against this policy, in the end every important railroad of this country and Canada gave way. It is doubtful, indeed, if any of them would today be willing to go back to the old method of individual bargaining, for the Brotherhood has insisted upon the inviolability of a contract once entered into. It has consistently held that "a bargain is a bargain, even if it is a poor bargain." Members who violate an agreement

are expelled, and any local lodge which is guilty of such an offense has its charter revoked.<sup>1</sup>

Once the practice of collective contract was fixed, it naturally followed that some mechanism for adjusting differences would be devised. The Brotherhood and the various roads now maintain a general board of adjustment for each railway system. The Brotherhood is strict in insisting that the action of this board is binding on all its members. This method of bargaining and of settling disputes has been so successful that since 1888 the Brotherhood has not engaged in an important strike. There have been minor disturbances, it is true, and several nation-wide threats, but no serious strikes inaugurated by the engineers. This great achievement of the Brotherhood could not have been possible without keen ability in the leaders and splendid solidarity among the men.

The individual is carefully looked after by the Brotherhood. The Locomotive Engineers' Mutual Life and Accident Insurance Association is an integral part of the Brotherhood, though it maintains a separate legal existence in order to comply

<sup>1</sup> In 1905 in New York City 393 members were expelled and their charter was revoked for violation of their contract of employment by taking part in a sympathetic strike of the subway and elevated roads.

with the statutory requirements of many States.<sup>1</sup> Every member must carry an insurance policy in this Association for not less than \$1500, though he cannot take more than \$4500. The policy is carried by the order if the engineer becomes sick or is otherwise disabled, but if he fails to pay assessments when he is in full health, he gives grounds for expulsion. There is a pension roll of three hundred disabled engineers, each of whom receives \$25 a month; and the four railroad brotherhoods together maintain a Home for Disabled Railroad Men at Highland Park, Illinois.

The technical side of engine driving is emphasized by the *Locomotive Engineers' Journal*, which goes to every member, and in discussions in the stated meetings of the Brotherhood. Intellectual and social interests are maintained also by lecture courses, study clubs, and women's auxiliaries. Attendance upon the lodge meetings has been made compulsory with the intention of insuring the order from falling prey to a designing minority

<sup>1</sup> The following figures show the status of the Insurance Association in 1918. The total amount of life insurance in force was \$161,205,500.00. The total amount of claims paid from 1868 to 1918 was \$41,085,123.04. The claims paid in 1918 amounted to \$3,014,540.22. The total amount of indemnity insurance in force in 1918 was \$12,486,397.50. The total claims paid up to 1918 were \$1,624,537.61; and during 1918, \$241,780.08.

— a condition which has proved the cause of the downfall of more than one labor union.

The Brotherhood of Engineers is virtually a large and prosperous business concern. Its management has been enterprising and provident; its treasury is full; its insurance policies aggregate many millions; it owns a modern skyscraper in Cleveland which cost \$1,250,000 and which yields a substantial revenue besides housing the Brotherhood offices.

The engineers have, indeed, succeeded in forming a real Brotherhood — a “feudal” brotherhood an opposing lawyer once called them — reëstablishing the medieval guild-paternalism so that each member is responsible for every other and all are responsible for each. They therefore merge themselves through self-discipline into a powerful unity for enforcing their demands and fulfilling their obligations.

The supreme authority of the Brotherhood is the Convention, which is composed of delegates from the local subdivisions. In the interim between conventions, the authorized leader of the organization is the Grand Chief Engineer, whose decrees are final unless reversed by the Convention. This authority places a heavy responsibility upon him, but the Brotherhood has been singularly fortunate

in its choice of chiefs. Since 1873 there have been only two. The first of these was P. M. Arthur, a sturdy Scot, born in 1831 and brought to America in boyhood. He learned the blacksmith and machinist trades but soon took to railroading, in which he rose rapidly from the humblest place to the position of engineer on the New York Central lines. He became one of the charter members of the Brotherhood in 1863 and was active in its affairs from the first. In 1873 the union became involved in a bitter dispute with the Pennsylvania Railroad, and Arthur, whose prompt and energetic action had already designated him as the natural leader of the Brotherhood, was elected to the chieftainship. For thirty years he maintained his prestige and became a national figure in the labor world. He died suddenly at Winnipeg in 1903 while speaking at the dinner which closed the general convention of the Brotherhood.

When P. M. Arthur joined the engineers' union, the condition of locomotive engineers was unsatisfactory. Wages were unstable; working conditions were hard and, in the freight service, intolerable. For the first decade of the existence of the Brotherhood, strike after strike took place in the effort to establish the right of organizing and the principle



of the collective contract. Arthur became head of the order at the beginning of the period of great financial depression which followed the first Civil War boom and which for six years threatened wages in all trades. But Arthur succeeded, by shrewd and careful bargaining, in keeping the pay of engineers from slipping down and in some instances he even advanced them. Gradually strikes became more and more infrequent; and the railways learned to rely upon his integrity, and the engineers to respect his skill as a negotiator. He proved to the first that he was not a labor agitator and to the others that he was not a visionary.

Year by year, Arthur accumulated prestige and power for his union by practical methods and by being content with a step at a time. This success, however, cost him the enmity of virtually all the other trades unionists. To them the men of his order were aristocrats, and he was lord over the aristocrats. He is said to have "had rare skill in formulating reasonable demands, and by consistently putting moderate demands strongly instead of immoderate demands weakly he kept the good will of railroad managers, while steadily obtaining better terms for his men." In this practice, he could not succeed without the solid good will of the

members of the Brotherhood; and this good will was possible only in an order which insisted upon that high standard of personal skill and integrity essential to a first-class engineer. Arthur possessed a genial, fatherly personality. His Scotch shrewdness was seen in his own real estate investments, which formed the foundation of an independent fortune. He lived in an imposing stone mansion in Cleveland; he was a director in a leading bank; and he identified himself with the public affairs of the city.

When Chief Arthur died, the Assistant Grand Chief Engineer, A. B. Youngson, who would otherwise have assumed the leadership for the unexpired term, was mortally ill and recommended the advisory board to telegraph Warren S. Stone an offer of the chieftainship. Thus events brought to the fore a man of marked executive talent who had hitherto been unknown but who was to play a tremendous rôle in later labor politics. Stone was little known east of the Mississippi. He had spent most of his life on the Rock Island system, had visited the East only once, and had attended but one meeting of the General Convention. In the West, however, he had a wide reputation for sound sense, and, as chairman of the general committee of adjustment of the Rock Island system, he had

made a deep impression on his union and his employers. Born in Ainsworth, Iowa, in 1860, Stone had received a high school education and had begun his railroading career as fireman on the Rock Island when he was nineteen years old. At twenty-four he became an engineer. In this capacity he spent the following nineteen years on the Rock Island road and then accepted the chieftainship of the Brotherhood.

Stone followed the general policy of his predecessor, and brought to his tasks the energy of youth and the optimism of the West. When he assumed the leadership, the cost of living was rising rapidly and he addressed himself to the adjustment of wages. He divided the country into three sections in which conditions were similar. He began in the Western section, as he was most familiar with that field, and asked all the general managers of that section to meet the Brotherhood for a wage conference. The roads did not accept his invitation until it was reinforced by the threat of a Western strike. The conference was a memorable one. For nearly three weeks the grand officers of the Brotherhood wrangled and wrought with the managers of the Western roads, who yielded ground slowly, a few pennies' increase at a time, until a

satisfactory wage scale was reached. Similarly the Southern section was conquered by the inexorable hard sense and perseverance of this new chieftain.

The dispute with the fifty-two leading roads in the so-called Eastern District, east of the Mississippi and north of the Norfolk and Western Railroad, came to a head in 1912. The engineers demanded that their wages should be "standardized" on a basis that one hundred miles or less, or ten hours or less, constitute a day's work; that is, the inequalities among the different roads should be leveled and similar service on the various roads be similarly rewarded. They also asked that their wages be made equal to the wages on the Western roads and presented several minor demands. All the roads concerned flatly refused to grant the demand for a standardized and increased wage, on the ground that it would involve an increased expenditure of \$7,000,000 a year. This amount could be made up only by increased rates, which the Interstate Commerce Commission must sanction, or by decreased dividends, which would bring a real hardship to thousands of stockholders.

The unions were fully prepared for a strike which would paralyze the essential traffic supplying approximately 38,000,000 people. Through the agency

of Judge Knapp of the United States Commerce Court and Dr. Neill of the United States Department of Labor, and under the authority of the Erdman Act, there was appointed a board of arbitration composed of men whose distinction commanded national attention. P. H. Morrissey, a former chief of the Conductors' and Trainmen's Union, was named by the engineers. President Daniel Willard of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, known for his fair treatment of his employees, was chosen by the roads. The Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, the Commissioner of Labor, and the presiding judge of the United States Commerce Court designated the following members of the tribunal: Oscar S. Straus, former Secretary of Commerce and Labor, chairman; Albert Shaw, editor of the *Review of Reviews*; Otto M. Eidlitz, former president of the Building Trades Association; Charles R. Van Hise, president of the University of Wisconsin; and Frederick N. Judson, of the St. Louis bar.

After five months of hearing testimony and deliberation, this distinguished board brought in a report that marked, it was hoped, a new epoch in railway labor disputes, for it recognized the rights of the public, the great third party to such disputes.

It granted the principle of standardization and minimum wage asked for by the engineers, but it allowed an increase in pay which was less by one-half than that demanded. In order to prevent similar discord in the future, the board recommended the establishment of Federal and state wage commissions with functions pertaining to wage disputes analogous to those of the public service commissions in regard to rates and capitalization. The report stated that, "while the railway employees feel that they cannot surrender their right to strike, if there were a wage commission which would secure them just wages the necessity would no longer exist for the exercise of their power. It is believed that, in the last analysis, the only solution — unless we are to rely solely upon the restraining power of public opinion — is to qualify the principle of free contract in the railroad service."<sup>1</sup>

While yielding to the wage findings of the board,

<sup>1</sup> The board recognized the great obstacles in the way of such a solution but went on to say: "The suggestion, however, grows out of a profound conviction that the food and clothing of our people, the industries and the general welfare of our nation, cannot be permitted to depend upon the policies and dictates of any particular group of men, whether employers or employees." And this conviction has grown apace with the years until it stands to-day as the most potent check to aggression by either trade unions or capital.

P. H. Morrissey vigorously dissented from the principle of the supremacy of public interest in these matters. He made clear his position in an able minority report: "I wish to emphasize my dissent from that recommendation of the board which in its effect virtually means compulsory arbitration for the railroads and their employees. Regardless of any probable constitutional prohibition which might operate against its being adopted, it is wholly impracticable. The progress towards the settlement of disputes between the railways and their employees without recourse to industrial warfare has been marked. There is nothing under present conditions to prevent its continuance. We will never be perfect, but even so, it will be immeasurably better than it will be under conditions such as the board proposes."

The significance of these words was brought out four years later when the united railway brotherhoods made their famous *coup* in Congress. For the time being, however, the public with its usual self-assurance thought the railway employee question was solved, though the findings were for one year only.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The award dated back to May 1, 1912, and was valid only one year from that date.



Daniel Willard speaking for the railroads, said: "My acceptance of the award as a whole does not signify my approval of all the findings in detail. It is intended, however, to indicate clearly that, although the award is not such as the railroads had hoped for, nor is it such as they felt would be justified by a full consideration of all the facts, yet having decided to submit this case to arbitration and having been given ample opportunity to present the facts and arguments in support of their position, they now accept without question the conclusion which was reached by the board appointed to pass upon the matter at issue."

A comparison of these statements shows how the balance of power had shifted, since the days when railway policies reigned supreme, from the corporation to the union. The change was amply demonstrated by the next grand entrance of the railway brotherhoods upon the public stage. After his victory in the Western territory, Chief Stone remarked: "Most labor troubles are the result of one of two things, misrepresentation or misunderstanding. Unfortunately, negotiations are sometimes entrusted to men who were never intended by nature for this mission, since they cannot discuss a question without losing their temper. . . .

It may be laid down as a fundamental principle without which no labor organization can hope to exist, that it must carry out its contracts. No employer can be expected to live up to a contract that is not regarded binding by the union."

The other railway brotherhoods to a considerable degree follow the model set by the engineers. The Order of Railway Conductors developed rapidly from the Conductors' Union which was organized by the conductors of the Illinois Central Railroad at Amboy, Illinois, in the spring of 1868. In the following July this union was extended to include all the lines in the State. In November of the same year a call to conductors on all the roads in the United States and the British Provinces was issued to meet at Columbus, Ohio, in December, to organize a general brotherhood. Ten years later the union adopted its present name. It has an ample insurance fund<sup>1</sup> based upon the principle that policies are not matured but members arriving at the age of seventy years are relieved from further payments. About thirty members are thus annually retired. At Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the national headquarters, the order publishes *The Railway*

<sup>1</sup> In 1919 the total amount of outstanding insurance was somewhat over \$90,000,000.

*Conductor*, a journal which aims not only at the solidarity of the membership but at increasing their practical efficiency.

The conductors are a conservative and carefully selected group of men. Each must pass through a long term of apprenticeship and must possess ability and personality. The order has been carefully and skillfully led and in recent years has had but few differences with the railways which have not been amicably settled. Edgar E. Clark was chosen president in 1890 and served until 1906, when he became a member of the Interstate Commerce Commission. He was born in 1856, received a public school education, and studied for some time in an academy at Lima, New York. At the age of seventeen, he began railroading and served as conductor on the Northern Pacific and other Western lines. He held numerous subordinate positions in the Brotherhood and in 1889 became its vice-president. He was appointed by President Roosevelt as a member of the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission in 1902 and is generally recognized as one of the most judicial heads in the labor world. He was succeeded as president of the order by Austin B. Garretson, who was born in Winterset, Iowa, in 1856. He began his railroad career at nineteen years of

age, became a conductor on the Burlington system, and had a varied experience on several Western lines, including the Mexican National and Mexican Central railways. His rise in the order was rapid and in 1889 he became vice-president. One of his intimate friends wrote that "in his capacity as Vice-President and President of the Order he has written more schedules and successfully negotiated more wage settlements, including the eight-hour day settlement in 1916, under the method of collective bargaining than any other labor leader on the American continent."

Garretson has long served as a member of the executive committee of the National Civic Federation and in 1912 was appointed by President Wilson a member of the Federal Commission on Industrial Relations. A man of great energy and force of character, he has recently assumed a leading place in labor union activities.

In addition to the locomotive engineers and the conductors, the firemen also have their union. Eleven firemen of the Erie Railroad organized a brotherhood at Port Jervis, New York, in December, 1873, but it was a fraternal order rather than a trade union. In 1877, the year of the great railway strikes, it was joined by the International

Firemen's Union, an organization without any fraternal or insurance features. In spite of this amalgamation, however, the growth of the Brotherhood was very slow. Indeed, so unsatisfactory was the condition of affairs that in 1879 the order took an unusual step. "So bitter was the continued opposition of railroad officials at this time," relates the chronicler of the Brotherhood (in some sections of the country it resulted in the disbandment of the lodges and the depletion of membership) "that it was decided, in order to remove the cause of such opposition, to eliminate the protective feature of the organization. With a view to this end a resolution was adopted ignoring strikes." This is one of the few recorded retreats of militant trade unionism. The treasury of the Brotherhood was so depleted that it was obliged to call upon local lodges for donations. By 1885, however, the order had sufficiently recovered to assume again the functions of a labor union in addition to its fraternal and beneficiary obligations. The days of its greatest hardships were over, although the historic strike on the Burlington lines that lasted virtually throughout the year 1888 and the Pullman strike in 1894 wrought a severe strain upon its staying powers. In 1906 the enginemen were

incorporated into the order, and thenceforth the membership grew rapidly. In 1913 a joint agreement was effected with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers whereby the two organizations could work together "on a labor union basis." Today men operating electric engines or motor or gas cars on lines using electricity are eligible for membership, if they are otherwise qualified. This arrangement does not interfere with unions already established on interurban lines.

The leadership of this order of firemen has been less continuous, though scarcely less conspicuous, than that of the other brotherhoods. Before 1886 the Grand Secretary and Treasurer was invested with greater authority than the grand master, and in this position Eugene V. Debs, who served from 1881 to 1892, and Frank W. Arnold, who served from 1893 to 1903, were potent in shaping the policies of the Union. There have been seven grand masters and one president (the name now used to designate the chief officer) since 1874. Of these leaders Frank P. Sargent served from 1886 until 1892, when he was appointed Commissioner General of Immigration by President Roosevelt. Since 1909, William S. Carter has been president of the Brotherhood. Born in Texas in 1859, he

began railroading at nineteen years of age and served in turn as fireman, baggageman, and engineer. Before his election to the editorship of the *Firemen's Magazine*, he held various minor offices in local lodges. Since 1894 he has served the order successively as editor, grand secretary and treasurer, and president. To his position he has brought an intimate knowledge of the affairs of the Union as well as a varied experience in practical railroading. Upon the entrance of America into the Great War, President Wilson appointed him Director of the Division of Labor of the United States Railway Administration.

Of the government and policy of the firemen's union President Carter remarked:

This Brotherhood may be compared to a state in a republic of railway unions, maintaining almost complete autonomy in its own affairs yet uniting with other railway brotherhoods in matters of mutual concern and in common defense. It is true that these railway brotherhoods carry the principle of home rule to great lengths and have acknowledged no common head, and by this have invited the criticism from those who believe . . . that only in one "big" union can railway employees hope for improved working condition. . . . That in union there is strength, no one will deny, but in any confederation of forces there must be an exchange of individual rights for this collective power. There is



a point in the combining of working people in labor unions where the loss of individual rights is not compensated by the increased power of the masses of workers.

In the cautious working out of this principle, the firemen have prospered after the manner of their colleagues in the other brotherhoods. Their membership embraces the large majority of their craft. From the date of the establishment of their beneficiary fund to 1918 a total of \$21,860,103.00 has been paid in death and disability claims and in 1918 the amount so paid was \$1,538,207.00. The *Firemen's Magazine*, established in 1876 and now published from headquarters in Cleveland, is indicative of the ambitions of the membership, for its avowed aim is to "make a specialty of educational matter for locomotive enginemen and other railroad employees." An attempt was even made in 1908 to conduct a correspondence school, under the supervision of the editor and manager of the magazine, but after three years this project was discontinued because it could not be made self-supporting.

The youngest of the railway labor organizations is the Brotherhood of Trainmen, organized in September, 1883, at Oneonta, New York. Its early years were lean and filled with bickerings and

doubts, and it was not until S. E. Wilkinson was elected grand master in 1885 that it assumed an important rôle in labor organizations. Wilkinson was one of those big, rough and ready men, with a natural aptitude for leadership, who occasionally emerge from the mass. He preferred railroading to schooling and spent more time in the train sheds of his native town of Monroeville, Ohio, than he did at school. At twelve years of age he ran away to join the Union Army, in which he served as an orderly until the end of the war. He then followed his natural bent, became a switchman and later a brakeman, was a charter member of the Brotherhood, and, when its outlook was least encouraging, became its Grand Master. At once under his leadership the organization became aggressive.

The conditions under which trainmen worked were far from satisfactory. At that time, in the Eastern field, the pay of a brakeman was between \$1.50 and \$2 a day in the freight service, \$45 a month in the passenger service, and \$50 a month for yard service. In the Southern territory, the wages were very much lower and in the Western about \$5 per month higher. The runs in the different sections of the country were not equalized; there was no limit to the number of hours called a

day's work; overtime and preparatory time were not counted in; and there were many complaints of arbitrary treatment of trainmen by their superiors. Wilkinson set to work to remedy the wage situation first. Almost at once he brought about the adoption of the principle of collective bargaining for trainmen and yardmen. By 1895, when he relinquished his office, the majority of the railways in the United States and Canada had working agreements with their train and yard service men. Wages had been raised, twelve hours or less and one hundred miles or less became recognized as a daily measure of service, and overtime was paid extra.

The panic of 1893 hit the railway service very hard. There followed many strikes engineered by the American Railway Union, a radical organization which carried its ideas of violence so far that it wrecked not only itself but brought the newer and conservative Brotherhoods to the verge of ruin. It was during this period of strain that, in 1895, P. H. Morrissey was chosen Grand Master of the Trainmen. With a varied training in railroading, in insurance, and in labor organization work, Morrissey was in many ways the antithesis of his predecessors who had, in a powerful and brusque way,

prepared the ground for his analytical and judicial leadership. He was unusually well informed on all matters pertaining to railroad operations, earnings, and conditions of employment, and on general economic conditions. This knowledge, together with his forcefulness, tact, parliamentary ability, and rare good judgment, soon made him the spokesman of all the railway Brotherhoods in their joint conferences and their leader before the public. He was not afraid to take the unpopular side of a cause, cared nothing for mere temporary advantages, and had the gift of inspiring confidence.

When Morrissey assumed the leadership of the Trainmen, their order had lost 10,000 members in two years and was about \$200,000 in debt. The panic had produced unemployment and distrust, and the violent reprisals of the American Railway Union had reaped a harvest of bitterness and disloyalty. During his fifteen years of service until he retired in 1909, Morrissey saw his order rejuvenated and virtually reconstructed, the work of the men standardized in the greater part of the country, slight increases of pay given to the freight and passenger men, and very substantial increases granted to the yard men. But his greatest service

to his order was in thoroughly establishing it in the public confidence.

He was succeeded by William G. Lee, who had served in many subordinate offices in local lodges before he had been chosen First Vice-Grand Master in 1895. For fifteen years he was a faithful understudy to Morrissey whose policy he has continued in a characteristically fearless and thoroughgoing manner. When he assumed the presidency of the order, he obtained a ten-hour day in the Eastern territory for all train and yard men, together with a slight increase in pay for all classes fixed on the ten-hour basis. The ten-hour day was now adopted in Western territory where it had not already been put into effect. The Southern territory, however, held out until 1912, when a general advance on all Southern railroads, with one exception, brought the freight and passenger men to a somewhat higher level of wages than existed in other parts of the country. In the following year the East and the West raised their wages so that finally a fairly level rate prevailed throughout the United States. In the movement for the eight-hour day which culminated in the passage of the Adamson Law by Congress, Lee and his order took a prominent part. In 1919 the Trainmen had

\$253,000,000 insurance in force, and up to that year had paid out \$42,500,000 in claims. Of this latter amount \$3,604,000 was paid out in 1918, one-half of which was attributed to the influenza epidemic.

Much of the success and power of the railroad Brotherhoods is due to the character of their members as well as to able leadership. The editor of a leading newspaper has recently written: "The impelling power behind every one of these organizations is the membership. I say this without detracting from the executive or administrative abilities of the men who have been at the head of these organizations, for their influence has been most potent in carrying out the will of their several organizations. But whatever is done is first decided upon by the men and it is then put up to their chief executive officers for their direction."

With a membership of 375,000 uniformly clean and competent, so well captained and so well fortified financially by insurance, benefit, and other funds, it is little wonder that the Brotherhoods have reached a permanent place in the railroad industry. Their progressive power can be discerned in Federal legislation pertaining to arbitration and labor conditions in interstate carriers. In 1888 an act was passed providing that, in cases

of railway labor disputes, the President might appoint two investigators who, with the United States Commission of Labor, should form a board to investigate the controversy and recommend "the best means for adjusting it." But as they were empowered to produce only findings and not to render decisions, the law remained a dead letter, without having a single case brought up under it. It was superseded in 1898 by the Erdman Act, which provided that certain Federal officials should act as mediators and that, in case they failed, a Board of Arbitrators was to be appointed whose word should be binding for a certain period of time and from whose decisions appeal could be taken to the Federal courts. Of the hundreds of disputes which occurred during the first eight years of the existence of this statute, only one was brought under the mechanism of the law. Federal arbitration was not popular. In 1905, however, a rather sudden change came over the situation. Over sixty cases were brought under the Erdman Act in about eight years. In 1913 the Newlands Law was passed providing for a permanent Board of Mediation and Conciliation, by which over sixty controversies have been adjusted.

The increase of brotherhood influence which



such legislation represents was accompanied by a consolidation in power. At first the Brotherhoods operated by railway systems or as individual orders. Later on they united into districts, all the Brotherhoods of a given district coöperating in their demands. Finally the coöperation of all the Brotherhoods in the United States on all the railway systems was effected. This larger organization came clearly to light in 1912, when the Brotherhoods submitted their disputes to the board of arbitration. This step was hailed by the public as going a long way towards the settlement of labor disputes by arbitral boards.

The latest victory of the Brotherhoods, however, has shaken public confidence and has ushered in a new era of brotherhood influence and Federal interference in railroad matters. In 1916, the four Brotherhoods threatened to strike. The mode of reckoning pay — whether upon an eight-hour or a longer day — was the subject of contention. The Department of Labor, through the Federal Conciliation Board, tried in vain to bring the opponents together. Even President Wilson's efforts to bring about an agreement proved futile. The roads agreed to arbitrate all the points, allowing the President to name the arbitrators; but the

Brotherhoods, probably realizing their temporary strategic advantage, refused point-blank to arbitrate. When the President tried to persuade the roads to yield the eight-hour day, they replied that it was a proper subject for arbitration.

Instead of standing firmly on the principle of arbitration, the President chose to go before Congress, on the afternoon of the 29th of August, and ask, first, for a reorganization of the Interstate Commerce Commission; second, for legal recognition of the eight-hour day for interstate carriers; third, for power to appoint a commission to observe the operation of the eight-hour day for a stated time; fourth, for reopening the question of an increase in freight rates to meet the enlarged cost of operation; fifth, for a law declaring railway strikes and lockouts unlawful until a public investigation could be made; sixth, for authorization to operate the roads in case of military necessity.

The strike was planned to fall on the expectant populace, scurrying home from their vacations, on the 4th of September. On the 1st of September an eight-hour bill, providing also for the appointment of a board of observation, was rushed through the House; on the following day it was hastened through the staid Senate; and on the third it

received the President's signature.<sup>1</sup> The other recommendations of the President were made to await the pleasure of Congress and the unions. To the suggestion that railway strikes be made unlawful until their causes are disclosed the Brotherhoods were absolutely opposed.

Many readjustments were involved in launching the eight-hour law, and in March, 1917, the Brotherhoods again threatened to strike. The President sent a committee, including the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Labor, to urge the parties to come to an agreement. On the 19th of March, the Supreme Court upheld the validity of the law, and the trouble subsided. But in the following November, after the declaration of war, clouds reappeared on the horizon, and again the unions refused the Government's suggestion of arbitration. Under war pressure, however, the Brotherhoods finally consented to hold their grievance in abeyance.

The haste with which the eight-hour law was enacted, and the omission of the vital balance suggested by the President appeared to many citizens

<sup>1</sup> This was on Sunday. In order to obviate any objection as to the legality of the signature the President signed the bill again on the following Tuesday, the intervening Monday being Labor Day.

to be a holdup of Congress, and the nearness of the presidential election suggested that a political motive was not absent. The fact that in the ensuing presidential election, Ohio, the home of the Brotherhoods, swung from the Republican to the Democratic column, did not dispel this suspicion from the public mind. Throughout this maneuver it was apparent that the unions were very confident, but whether because of a prearranged pact, or because of a full treasury, or because of a feeling that the public was with them, or because of the opposite belief that the public feared them, must be left to individual conjecture. None the less, the public realized that the principle of arbitration had given way to the principle of coercion.

Soon after the United States had entered the Great War, the Government, under authority of an act of Congress, took over the management of all the interstate railroads, and the nation was launched upon a vast experiment destined to test the capacities of all the parties concerned. The dispute over wages that had been temporarily quieted by the Adamson Law broke out afresh until settled by the famous *Order No. 27*, issued by William G. McAdoo, the Director General of Railroads, and providing a substantial readjustment of wages

and hours. In the spring of 1919 another large wage increase was granted to the men by Director General Hines, who succeeded McAdoo. Meanwhile the Brotherhoods, through their counsel, laid before the congressional committee a plan for the government ownership and joint operation of the roads, known as the Plumb plan, and the American people are now face to face with an issue which will bring to a head the paramount question of the relation of employees on government works to the Government and to the general public.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ISSUES AND WARFARE

THERE has been an enormous expansion in the demands of the unions since the early days of the Philadelphia cordwainers; yet these demands involve the same fundamental issues regarding hours, wages, and the closed shop. Most unions, when all persiflage is set aside, are primarily organized for business — the business of looking after their own interests. Their treasury is a war chest rather than an insurance fund. As a benevolent organization, the American union is far behind the British union with its highly developed Friendly Societies.

The establishment of a standard rate of wages is perhaps, as the United States Industrial Commission reported in 1901, “the primary object of trade union policy.” The most promising method of adjusting the wage contract is by the collective trade agreement. The mechanism of the union has made possible collective bargaining, and in

numerous trades wages and other conditions are now adjusted by this method. One of the earliest of these agreements was effected by the Iron Molders' Union in 1891 and has been annually renewed. The coal operatives, too, for a number of years have signed a wage agreement with their miners, and the many local difficulties and differences have been ingeniously and successfully met. The great railroads have, likewise, for many years made periodical contracts with the railway Brotherhoods. The glove-makers, cigar-makers, and, in many localities, workers in the building trades and on street-railway systems have the advantage of similar collective agreements. In 1900 the American Newspaper Publishers Association and the International Typographical Union, after many years of stubborn fighting merged their numerous differences in a trade contract to be in effect for one year. This experiment proved so successful that the agreement has since then been renewed for five-year periods. In 1915 a bitter strike of the garment makers in New York City was ended by a "protocol." The principle of collective agreement has become so prevalent that the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor believes that it "is being accepted with increasing favor by both employers



and employees," and John Mitchell, speaking from wide experience and an intimate knowledge of conditions, says that "the hope of future peace in the industrial world lies in the trade agreement." These agreements are growing in complexity, and today they embrace not only questions of wages and hours but also methods for adjusting all the differences which may arise between the parties to the bargain.

The very success of collective bargaining hinges upon the solidarity and integrity of the union which makes the bargain. A union capable of enforcing an agreement is a necessary antecedent condition to such a contract. With this fact in mind, one can believe that John Mitchell was not unduly sanguine in stating that "the tendency is toward the growth of compulsory membership . . . and the time will doubtless come when this compulsion will be as general and will be considered as little of a grievance as the compulsory attendance of children at school." There are certain industries so well centralized, however, that their coercive power is greater than that of the labor union, and these have maintained a consistent hostility to the closed shop. The question of the closed shop is, indeed, the most stubborn issue confronting the union.

The principle involves the employment of only union men in a shop; it means a monopoly of jobs by members of the union. The issue is as old as the unions themselves and as perplexing as human nature. As early as 1806 it was contended for by the Philadelphia cordwainers and by 1850 it had become an established union policy. While wages and hours are now, in the greater industrial fields, the subject of a collective contract, this question of union monopoly is still open, though there has been some progress towards an adjustment. Whenever the trade agreement provides for a closed shop, the union, through its proper committees and officers, assumes at least part of the responsibility of the discipline. The agreement also includes methods for arbitrating differences. The acid test of the union is its capacity to live up to this trade agreement.

For the purpose of forcing its policies upon its employers and society the unions have resorted to the strike and picketing, the boycott, and the union label. When violence occurs, it usually is the concomitant of a strike; but violence unaccompanied by a strike is sometimes used as a union weapon.

The strike is the oldest and most spectacular weapon in the hands of labor. For many years it

was thought a necessary concomitant of machine industry. The strike, however, antedates machinery and was a practical method of protest long before there were unions. Men in a shop simply agreed not to work further and walked out. The earliest strike in the United States, as disclosed by the United States Department of Labor occurred in 1741 among the journeymen bakers in New York City. In 1792 the cordwainers of Philadelphia struck. By 1834 strikes were so prevalent that the New York *Daily Advertiser* declared them to be "all the fashion." These demonstrations were all small affairs compared with the strikes that disorganized industry after the Civil War or those that swept the country in successive waves in the late seventies, the eighties, and the nineties. The United States Bureau of Labor has tabulated the strike statistics for the twenty-five year period from 1881 to 1905. This list discloses the fact that 38,303 strikes and lockouts occurred, involving 199,954 establishments and 7,444,279 employees. About 2,000,000 other employees were thrown out of work as an indirect result. In 1894, the year of the great Pullman strike, 610,425 men were out of work at one time; and 659,792 in 1902. How much time and money these ten million wage-earners

lost, and their employers lost, and society lost, can never be computed, nor how much nervous energy was wasted, good will thrown to the winds, and mutual suspicion created.

The increase of union influence is apparent, for recognition of the union has become more frequently a cause for strikes.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, while the unions were responsible for about 47 per cent of the strikes in 1881, they had originated, directly or indirectly, 75 per cent in 1905. More significant, indeed, is the fact that striking is a growing habit. In 1903, for instance, there were 3494 strikes, an average of about ten a day.

Preparedness is the watchword of the Unions in this warfare. They have generals and captains, a war chest and relief committees, as well as publicity agents and sympathy scouts whose duty it is to enlist the interest of the public. Usually the leaders of the unions are conservative and deprecate

<sup>1</sup> The cause of the strikes tabulated by the Bureau of Labor is shown in the following table of percentages:

	1881	1891	1901	1905
For increase of wages:	61	27	29	32
Against reduction of wages:	10	11	4	5
For reduction in hours:	3	5	7	5
Recognition of Union:	6	14	28	31

violence. But a strike by its very nature offers an opportunity to the lawless. The destruction of property and the coercion of workmen have been so prevalent in the past that, in the public mind, violence has become universally associated with strikes. Judge Jenkins, of the United States Circuit Court, declared, in a leading case, that "a strike without violence would equal the representation of Hamlet with the part of Hamlet omitted." Justice Brewer of the United States Supreme Court said that "the common rule as to strikes" is not only for the workers to quit but to "forcibly prevent others from taking their place." Historic examples involving violence of this sort are the great railway strikes of 1877, when Pittsburgh, Reading, Cincinnati, Chicago, and Buffalo were mob-ridden; the strike of the steel-workers at Homestead, Pennsylvania, in 1892; the Pullman strike of 1894, when President Cleveland sent Federal troops to Chicago; the great anthracite strike of 1902, which the Federal Commission characterized as "stained with a record of riot and bloodshed"; the civil war in the Colorado and Idaho mining regions, where the Western Federation of Miners battled with the militia and Federal troops; the dynamite outrages, perpetrated by the structural iron workers, stretching

across the entire country, and reaching a dastardly climax in the dynamiting of the Los Angeles *Times* building on October 1, 1910, in which some twenty men were killed. The recoil from this outrage was the severest blow which organized labor has received in America. John J. McNamara, Secretary of the Structural Iron Workers' Association, and his brother James were indicted for murder. After the trial was staged and the eyes of the nation were upon it, the public was shocked and the hopes of labor unionists were shattered by the confessions of the principals. In March, 1912, a Federal Grand Jury at Indianapolis returned fifty-four indictments against officers and members of the same union for participation in dynamite outrages that had occurred during the six years in many parts of the country, with a toll of over one hundred lives and the destruction of property valued at many millions of dollars. Among those indicted was the president of the International Association of Bridge and Structural Iron Workers. Most of the defendants were sentenced to various terms in the penitentiary.

The records of this industrial warfare are replete with lesser battles where thuggery joined hands with desperation in the struggle for wages.

Evidence is not wanting that local leaders have frequently incited their men to commit acts of violence in order to impress the public with their earnestness. It is not an inviting picture, this matching of the sullen violence of the mob against the sullen vigilance of the corporation. Yet such methods have not always been used, for the union has done much to systematize this guerrilla warfare. It has matched the ingenuity and the resolution of the employer, backed by his detectives and professional strike-breakers; it has perfected its organization so that the blow of a whistle or the mere uplifting of a hand can silence a great mill. Some of the notable strikes have been managed with rare skill and diplomacy. Some careful observers, indeed, are inclined to the opinion that the amount of violence that takes place in the average strike has been grossly exaggerated. They maintain that, considering the great number of strikes, the earnestness with which they are fought, the opportunity they offer to the lawless, and the vast range of territory they cover, the amount of damage to property and person is unusually small and that the public, through sensational newspaper reports of one or two acts of violence, is led to an exaggerated opinion of its prevalence.



It must be admitted, however, that the wisdom and conservatism of the national labor leaders is neutralized by their lack of authority in their particular organization. A large price is paid for the autonomy that permits the local unions to declare strikes without the sanction of the general officers. There are only a few unions, perhaps half a dozen, in which a local can be expelled for striking contrary to the wish of the national officers. In the United Mine Workers' Union, for example, the local must secure the consent of the district officers and national president, or, if these disagree, of the executive board, before it can declare a strike. The tendency to strike on the spur of the moment is much more marked among the newer unions than among the older ones, which have perfected their strike machinery through much experience and have learned the cost of hasty and unjustified action.

A less conspicuous but none the less effective weapon in the hands of labor is the boycott,<sup>1</sup> which is carried by some of the unions to a terrible

<sup>1</sup> In 1880, Lord Erne, an absentee Irish landlord, sent Captain Boycott to Connemara to subdue his irate tenants. The people of the region refused to have any intercourse whatever with the agent or his family. And social and business ostracism has since been known as the boycott.

perfection. It reached its greatest power in the decade between 1881 and 1891. Though it was aimed at a great variety of industries, it seemed to be peculiarly effective in the theater, hotel, restaurant, and publishing business, and in the clothing and cigar trades. For sheer arbitrary coereiveness, nothing in the armory of the union is so effective as the boycott. A flourishing business finds its trade gone overnight. Leading customers withdraw their patronage at the union's threat. The alert picket is the harbinger of ruin, and the union black list is as fraught with threat as the black hand.

The New York Bureau of Statistics of Labor has shown that during the period of eight years between 1885 and 1892 there were 1352 boycotts in New York State alone. A sort of terrorism spread among the tradespeople of the cities. But the unions went too far. Instances of gross unfairness aroused public sympathy against the boycotters. In New York City, for instance, a Mrs. Grey operated a small bakery with nonunion help. Upon her refusal to unionize her shop at the command of the walking delegate, her customers were sent the usual boycott notice, and pickets were posted. Her delivery wagons were followed, and her customers were threatened. Grocers selling

her bread were systematically boycotted. All this persecution merely aroused public sympathy for Mrs. Grey, and she found her bread becoming immensely popular. The boycotters then demanded \$2500 for paying their boycott expenses. When news of this attempt at extortion was made public, it heightened the tide of sympathy, the courts took up the matter, and the boycott failed. The *New York Boycotter*, a journal devoted to this form of coercion, declared: "In boycotting we believe it to be legitimate to strike a man financially, socially, or politically. We believe in hitting him where it will hurt the most; we believe in remorselessly crowding him to the wall; but when he is down, instead of striking him, we would lift him up and stand him once more on his feet." When the boycott thus enlisted the aid of blackmail, it was doomed in the public esteem. Boycott indictments multiplied, and in one year in New York City alone, over one hundred leaders of such attempts at coercion were sentenced to imprisonment.

The boycott, however, was not laid aside as a necessary weapon of organized labor because it had been abused by corrupt or overzealous unionists, nor because it had been declared illegal by the courts. All the resources of the more conservative

unions and of the American Federation of Labor have been enlisted to make it effective in extreme instances where the strike has failed. This application of the method can best be illustrated by the two most important cases of boycott in our history, the Buck's Stove and Range case and the Danbury Hatters' case. Both were fought through the Federal courts, with the defendants backed by the American Federation and opposed by the Anti-Boycott Association, a federation of employers.

The Buck's Stove and Range Company of St. Louis incurred the displeasure of the Metal Polishers' Union by insisting upon a ten-hour day. On August 27, 1906, at five o'clock in the afternoon, on a prearranged signal, the employees walked out. They returned to work the next morning and all were permitted to take their accustomed places except those who had given the signal. They were discharged. At five o'clock that afternoon the men put aside their work, and the following morning reappeared. Again the men who had given the signal were discharged, and the rest went to work. The union then sent notice to the foreman that the discharged men must be reinstated or that all would quit. A strike ensued which soon led to a boycott of national proportions. It spread from the local

to the St. Louis Central Trades and Labor Union and to the Metal Polishers' Union. In 1907 the executive council of the American Federation of Labor officially placed the Buck's Stove and Range Company on the unfair list and gave this action wide and conspicuous circulation in *The Federationist*. This boycott received further impetus from the action of the Mine Workers, who in their Annual Convention resolved that the Buck's Stove and Range Company be put on the unfair list and that "any member of the United Mine Workers of America purchasing a stove of above make be fined \$5.00 and failing to pay the same be expelled from the organization."

Espionage became so efficient and letters from old customers withdrawing patronage became so numerous and came from so wide a range of territory that the company found itself rapidly nearing ruin. An injunction was secured, enjoining the American Federation from blacklisting the company. The labor journals circumvented this mandate by publishing in display type the statement that "It is unlawful for the American Federation of Labor to boycott Buck's Stoves and Ranges," and then in small type adroitly recited the news of the court's decision in such a way that the reader

would see at a glance that the company was under union ban. These evasions of the court's order were interpreted as contempt, and in punishment the officers of the Federation were sentenced to imprisonment — Frank Morrison for six months, John Mitchell for nine months, Samuel Gompers for twelve months. But a technicality intervened between the leaders and the cells awaiting them. The public throughout the country had followed the course of this case with mingled feelings of sympathy and disfavor, and though the boycott had never met with popular approval, on the whole the public was relieved to learn that the jail-sentences were not to be served.

The Danbury Hatters' boycott was brought on in 1903 by the attempt of the Hatters' Union to make a closed shop of a manufacturing concern in Danbury, Connecticut. The unions moved upon Danbury, flushed with two recent victories — one in Philadelphia, where an important hat factory had agreed to the closed shop after spending some \$40,000 in fighting, and another at Orange, New Jersey, where a manufacturer had spent \$25,000. But as the Danbury concern was determined to fight the union, in 1902 a nationwide boycott was declared. The company then



brought suit against members of the union in the United States District Court. Injunction proceedings reached the Supreme Court of the United States on a demurrer, and in February, 1908, the court declared that the Sherman Anti-Trust Law forbade interstate boycotts. The case then returned to the original court for trial. Testimony was taken in many States, and after a trial lasting twelve weeks the jury assessed the damages to the plaintiff at \$74,000. On account of error, the case was remanded for re-trial in 1911. At the second trial the jury gave the plaintiff a verdict for \$80,000, the full amount asked. According to the law, this amount was trebled, leaving the judgment, with costs added, at \$252,000. The Supreme Court having sustained the verdict, the puzzling question of how to collect it arose. As such funds as the union had were invulnerable to process, the savings bank accounts of the individual defendants were attached. The union insisted that the defendants were not taxable for accrued interest, and the United States Supreme Court, now appealed to for a third time, sustained the plaintiff's contention. In this manner \$60,000 were obtained. Foreclosure proceedings were then begun against one hundred and forty homes belonging to union men



in the towns of Danbury, Norwalk, and Bethel. The union boasted that this sale would prove only an incubus to the purchasers, for no one would dare occupy the houses sold under such circumstances. In the meantime the American Federation, which had financed the litigation, undertook to raise the needed sum by voluntary collection and made Gompers's birthday the occasion for a gift to the Danbury local. The Federation insisted that the houses be sold on foreclosure and that the collected money be used not as a prior settlement but as an indemnity to the individuals thus deprived of their homes. Rancor gave way to reason, however, and just before the day fixed for the foreclosure sale the matter was settled. In all, \$235,000 was paid in damages by the union to the company. In the fourteen years during which this contest was waged, about forty defendants, one of the plaintiffs, and eight judges who had passed on the controversy, died. The outcome served as a spur to the Federation in hastening through Congress the Clayton bill of 1914, designed to place labor unions beyond the reach of the anti-trust laws.

The union label has in more recent years achieved importance as a weapon in union warfare. This is a mark or device denoting a union-made article.

It might be termed a sort of labor union trademark. Union men are admonished to favor the goods so marked, but it was not until national organizations were highly perfected that the label could become of much practical value. It is a device of American invention and was first used by the cigar makers in 1874. In 1880 their national body adopted the now familiar blue label and, with great skill and perseverance and at a considerable outlay of money, has pushed its union-made ware, in the face of sweat-shop competition, of the introduction of cigar making machinery, and of fraudulent imitation. Gradually other unions making products of common consumption adopted labels. Conspicuous among these were the garment makers, the hat makers, the shoe makers, and the brewery workers. As the value of the label manifestly depends upon the trade it entices, the unions are careful to emphasize the sanitary conditions and good workmanship which a label represents.

The application of the label is being rapidly extended. Building materials are now in many large cities under label domination. In Chicago the bricklayers have for over fifteen years been able to force the builders to use only union-label

brick, and the carpenters have forced the contractors to use only material from union mills. There is practically no limit to this form of mandatory boycott. The barbers, retail clerks, hotel employees, and butcher workmen hang union cards in their places of employment or wear badges as insignia of union loyalty. As these labels do not come under the protection of the United States trade-mark laws, the unions have not infrequently been forced to bring suits against counterfeiters.

Finally, in their efforts to fortify themselves against undue increase in the rate of production or "speeding up," against the inrush of new machinery, and against the debilitating alternation of rush work and no work, the unions have attempted to restrict the output. The United States Industrial Commission reported in 1901 that "there has always been a strong tendency among labor organizations to discourage exertion beyond a certain limit. The tendency does not express itself in formal rules. On the contrary, it appears chiefly in the silent, or at least informal pressure of working class opinion." Some unions have rules, others a distinct understanding, on the subject of a normal day's work, and some discourage piecework. But it is difficult to determine how far this policy has

been carried in application. Carroll D. Wright, in a special report as United States Commissioner of Labor in 1904, said that "unions in some cases fix a limit to the amount of work a workman may perform a day. Usually it is a secret understanding, but sometimes, when the union is strong, no concealment is made." His report mentioned several trades, including the building trades, in which this curtailment is prevalent.

The course of this industrial warfare between the unions and the employers has been replete with sordid details of selfishness, corruption, hatred, suspicion, and malice. In every community the strike or the boycott has been an ominous visitant, leaving in its trail a social bitterness which even time finds it difficult to efface. In the great cities and the factory towns, the constant repetition of labor struggles has created centers of perennial discontent which are sources of never-ending reprisals. In spite of individual injustice, however, one can discern in the larger movements a current setting towards a collective justice and a communal ideal which society in self-defense is imposing upon the combatants.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE NEW TERRORISM: THE I. W. W.

IT was not to be expected that the field of organized labor would be left undisputed to the moderation of the trade union after its triumph over the extreme methods of the Knights of Labor. The public, however, did not anticipate the revolutionary ideal which again sought to inflame industrial unionism. After the decadence of the older type of the industrial union several conditions manifested themselves which now, in retrospect, appear to have encouraged the violent militants who call themselves the Industrial Workers of the World.

First of all, there took place in Europe the rise of syndicalism with its adoption of sympathetic strikes as one of its methods. Syndicalism flourished especially in France, where from its inception the alert French mind had shaped for it a philosophy of violence, whose subtlest exponent was Georges Sorel. *The Socialist Future of Trade*

*Unions*, which he published in 1897, was an early exposition of his views, but his *Reflections upon Violence* in 1908 is the best known of his contributions to this newer doctrine. With true Gallic fervor, the French workingman had sought to translate his philosophy into action, and in 1906 undertook, with the aid of a revolutionary organization known as the *Confédération Général du Travail*, a series of strikes which culminated in the railroad and post office strike of 1909. All these uprisings — for they were in reality more than strikes — were characterized by extreme language, by violent action, and by impressive public demonstrations. In Italy, Spain, Norway, and Belgium, the syndicalists were also active. Their partiality to violent methods attracted general attention in Europe and appealed to that small group of American labor leaders whose experience in the Western Federation of Miners had taught them the value of dynamite as a press agent.

In the meantime material was being gathered for a new outbreak in the United States. The casual laborers had greatly increased in numbers, especially in the West. These migratory workingmen — the “hobo miners,” the “hobo lumberjacks,” the “blanket stiffs,” of colloquial speech —

wander about the country in search of work. They rarely have ties of family and seldom ties of locality. About one-half of these wanderers are American born. They are to be described with precision as "floaters." Their range of operations includes the wheat regions west of the Mississippi, the iron mines of Michigan and Minnesota, the mines and forests of Idaho, Montana, Colorado, Washington, and Oregon, and the fields of California and Arizona. They prefer to winter in the cities, but, as their only refuge is the bunk lodging house, they increase the social problem in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and other centers of the unemployed. Many of these migrants never were skilled workers; but a considerable portion of them have been forced down into the ranks of the unskilled by the inevitable tragedies of prolonged unemployment. Such men lend a willing ear to the labor agitator. The exact number in this wandering class is not known. The railroad companies have estimated that at a given time there have been 500,000 hobos trying to beat their way from place to place. Unquestionably a large percentage of the 23,964 trespassers killed and of the 25,236 injured on railway rights of way from 1901 to 1904 belonged to this class.



It is not alone these drifters, however, who because of their irresponsibility and their hostility toward society became easy victims to the industrial organizer. The great mass of unskilled workers in the factory towns proved quite as tempting to the propagandist. Among laborers of this class, wages are the lowest and living conditions the most uninviting. Moreover, this group forms the industrial reservoir which receives the settlings of the most recent European and Asiatic immigration. These people have a standard of living and conceptions of political and individual freedom which are at variance with American traditions. Though their employment is steadier than that of the migratory laborer, and though they often have ties of family and other stabilizing responsibilities, their lives are subject to periods of unemployment, and these fluctuations serve to feed their innate restlessness. They are, in quite the literal sense of the word, American proletarians. They are more volatile than any European proletarian, for they have learned the lesson of migration, and they retain the socialistic and anarchistic philosophy of their European fellow-workers.

There were several attempts to organize casual labor after the decline of the Knights of Labor.

But it is difficult to arouse any sustained interest in industrial organizations among workingmen of this class. They lack the motive of members of a trade union, and the migratory character of such workers deprives their organization of stability. One industrial organization, however, has been of the greatest encouragement to the I. W. W. The Western Federation of Miners, which was organized at Butte, Montana, on May 15, 1893, has enjoyed a more turbulent history than any other American labor union. It was conceived in that spirit of rough resistance which local unions of miners, for some years before the amalgamation of the unions, had opposed to the ruthless and firm determination of the mine owners. In 1897, the president of the miners, after quoting the words of the Constitution of the United States giving citizens the right to bear arms, said: "This you should comply with immediately. Every union should have a rifle club. I strongly advise you to provide every member with the latest improved rifle which can be obtained from the factory at a nominal price. I entreat you to take action on this important question, so that in two years we can hear the inspiring music of the martial tread of 25,000 armed men in the ranks of labor."

This militant vision was fortunately never quite fulfilled. But armed strikers there were, by the thousands, and the gruesome details of their fight with mine owners in Colorado are set forth in a special report of the United States Commissioner of Labor in 1905. The use of dynamite became early associated with this warfare in Colorado. In 1903 a fatal explosion occurred in the Vindicator mine in Teller County, and serious disorders broke out in Telluride, the county seat of San Miguel County. In 1904 a cage lifting miners from the shaft in the Independence mine at Victor was dropped and fifteen men were killed. There were many minor outrages, isolated murders, "white cap" raids, infernal machines, deportations, black lists, and so on. In Montana and Idaho similar scenes were enacted and reached a climax in the murder of Governor Steunenberg of Idaho. Yet the union officers indicted for this murder were released by the trial jury.

Such was the preparatory school of the new unionism, which had its inception in several informal conferences held in Chicago. The first, attended by only six radical leaders, met in the autumn of 1904. The second, held in January, 1905, issued a manifesto attacking the trade unions, calling for a "new departure" in the labor movement,

and inviting those who desired to join in organizing such a movement to "meet in convention in Chicago the 27th day of June, 1905." About two hundred persons responded to this appeal and organized the Industrial Workers of the World, almost unnoticed by the press of the day and scorned by the American Federation of Labor, whose official organ had called those in attendance at the second conference "engaged in the delectable work of trying to divert, pervert, and disrupt the labor movement of the country."

An overwhelming influence in this convention was wielded by the Western Federation of Miners and the Socialistic American Labor Union, two radical labor bodies which looked upon the trade unions as "union snobbery" and the "aristocracy of labor," and upon the American Federation as "the consummate flower of craft unionism" and "a combination of job trusts." They believed trade unionism wrong in principle. They discarded the principle of trade autonomy for the principle of laboring class solidarity, for, as one of their spokesmen said, "The industrial union, in contradistinction to the craft union, is that organization through which all its members in one industry, or in all industries if necessary, can act as a unit."

While this convention was united in denouncing the trade unions, it was not so unanimous in other matters, for the leaders were all veterans in those factional quarrels which characterize Socialists the world over. Eugene V. Debs, for example, was the hero of the Knights of Labor and had achieved wide notoriety during the Pullman strike by being imprisoned for contempt of court. William D. Haywood, popularly known as "Big Bill," received a rigorous training in the Western Federation of Miners. Daniel DeLeon, whose right name, the *American Federationist* alleged, was Daniel Loeb, was a university graduate and a vehement revolutionary, the leader of the Socialistic Labor party, and the editor of the *Daily People*. A. M. Simons, the leader of the Socialist party and the editor of the *Coming Nation*, was at swords' points with DeLeon. William E. Trautmann was the fluent spokesman of the anti-political faction. These men dominated the convention.

After some twelve days of discussion, they agreed upon a constitution which established six departments,<sup>1</sup> provided for a general executive

<sup>1</sup> 1. Agriculture, Land, Fisheries, and Water Products. 2. Mining. 3. Transportation and Communication. 4. Manufacturing and General Production. 5. Construction. 6. Public Service.

board with centralized powers, and at the same time left to the local and department organizations complete industrial autonomy. The I. W. W. in "the first constitution, crude and provisional as it was, made room for all the world's workers."<sup>1</sup> This was, indeed, the great object of the organization.

Whatever visions of world conquest the militants may at first have fostered were soon shattered by internal strife. There were unreconcilable elements in the body: those who regarded the political aspect as paramount and industrial unions as allies of socialism; those who regarded the forming of unions as paramount and politics as secondary; and those who regarded all forms of political activity as mere waste of energy. The first two groups were tucked under the wings of the Socialist party and the Socialist Labor party. The third group was frankly anarchistic and revolutionary. In the fourth annual convention the Socialist factions withdrew, established headquarters at Detroit, organized what is called the Detroit branch, and left the Chicago field to the revolutionists. So socialism "pure and simple," and what amounts to

<sup>1</sup> J. G. Brissenden, *The Launching of the Industrial Workers of the World*, page 41.

anarchism "pure and simple," fell out, after they had both agreed to disdain trade unionism "pure and simple."

This shift proved the great opportunity for Haywood and his disciples. Feeling himself now free of all political encumbrances, he gathered around him a small group of enthusiastic leaders, some of whom had a gift of diabolical intrigue, and with indomitable perseverance and zeal he set himself to seeking out the neglected, unskilled, and casual laborer. Within a few years he so dominated the movement that, in the public mind, the I. W. W. is associated with the Chicago branch and the Detroit faction is well-nigh forgotten.

As a preliminary to a survey of some of the battles that made the I. W. W. a symbol of terror in many communities it will be well to glance for a moment at the underlying doctrines of the organization. In a preamble now notorious it declared that "the working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people, and the few who make up the employing class have all the good things of life. Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world as a class take



possession of the earth and the machinery of production and abolish the wage system."

This thesis is a declaration of war as well as a declaration of principles. The I. W. W. aims at nothing less than the complete overthrow of modern capitalism and the political structure which accompanies it. Emma Goldman, who prides herself on having received her knowledge of syndicalism "from actual contact" and not from books, says that "syndicalism repudiates and condemns the present industrial arrangement as unjust and criminal." Edward Hamond calls the labor contract "the sacred cow" of industrial idolatry and says that the aim of the I. W. W. is "the abolition of the wage system." And W. E. Trautmann affirms that "the industrial unionist holds that there can be no agreement with the employers of labor which the workers have to consider sacred and inviolable." In place of what they consider an unjust and universal capitalistic order they would establish a new society in which "the unions of the workers will own and manage all industries, regulate consumption, and administer the general social interests."

How is this contemplated revolution to be achieved? By the working classes themselves and

not through political activity, for "one of the first principles of the I. W. W. is that political power rests on economic power. . . . It must gain control of the shops, ships, railways, mines, mills." And how is it to gain this all-embracing control? By persuading every worker to join the union, the "one great organization" which, according to Haywood, is to be "big enough to take in the black man, the white man; big enough to take in all nationalities—an organization that will be strong enough to obliterate state boundaries, to obliterate national boundaries. . . . We, the I. W. W., stand on our two feet, the class struggle and industrial unionism, and coolly say we want the whole earth." When the great union has become universal, it will simply take possession of its own, will "lock the employers out for good as owners and parasites, and give them a chance to become useful toilers." The resistance that will assuredly be made to this process of absorption is to be met by direct action, the general strike, and sabotage—a trinity of phrases imported from Europe, each one of special significance.

"The general strike means a stoppage of work," says Emma Goldman with naïve brevity. It was thought of long before the I. W. W. existed, but it

has become the most valuable weapon in their arsenal. Their pamphlets contain many allusions to the great strikes in Belgium, Russia, Italy, France, Scandinavia, and other European countries, that were so widespread as to merit being called general. If all the workers can be induced to stop work, even for a very brief interval, such action would be regarded as the greatest possible manifestation of the "collective power of the producers."

Direct action, a term translated directly from the French, is more difficult to define. This method sets itself in opposition to the methods of the capitalist in retaining control of industry, which is spoken of as indirect action. Laws, machinery, credits, courts, and constabulary are indirect methods whereby the capitalist keeps possession of his property. The industrialist matches this with a direct method. For example, he engages in a passive strike, obeying rules so literally as to destroy both their utility and his work; or in an opportune strike, ceasing work suddenly when he knows his employer has orders that must be immediately filled; or in a temporary strike, quitting work one day and coming back the next. His weapon is organized opportunism, wielding an unexpected

blow, and keeping the employer in a frenzy of fearful anticipation.

Finally, sabotage is a word that expresses the whole philosophy and practice of revolutionary labor. John Spargo, in his *Syndicalism, Industrial Unionism and Socialism*, traces the origin of the word to the dockers' union in London. Attempt after attempt had proved futile to win by strikes the demands of these unskilled workers. The men were quite at the end of their resources, when finally they hit upon the plan of "lying down on the job" or "soldiering." As a catchword they adopted the Scotch phrase *ca'canny*, to go slow or be careful not to do too much. As an example they pointed to the Chinese coolies who met a refusal of increased wages by cutting off a few inches from their shovels on the principle of "small pay, small work." He then goes on to say that "the idea was very easily extended. From the slowing up of the human worker to the slowing up of the iron worker, the machine, was an easy transition. Judiciously planned 'accidents' might easily create confusion for which no one could be blamed. A few 'mistakes' in handling cargoes might easily cost the employers far more than a small increase in wages would."

Some French syndicalists, visiting London, were greatly impressed with this new cunning. But as they had no ready translation for the Scottish *ca'canny*, they ingeniously abstracted the same idea from the old French saying *Travailler à coups de sabots* — to work as if one had on wooden shoes — and sabotage thus became a new and expressive phrase in the labor war.

Armed with these weapons, Haywood and his henchmen moved forward. Not long after the first convention in 1905, they made their presence known at Goldfield, Nevada. Then they struck simultaneously at Youngstown, Ohio, and Portland, Oregon. The first battle, however, to attract general notice was at McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania, in 1909. In this warfare between the recently organized unskilled workers and the efficient state constabulary, the I. W. W. sent notice "that for every striker killed or injured by the cossacks, the life of a cossack will be exacted in return." And they collected their gruesome toll.

In 1912 occurred the historic strike in the mill town of Lawrence, Massachusetts. This affair was so adroitly managed by the organizers of the Workers that within a few weeks every newspaper of importance in America was publishing long

descriptions of the new anarchism. Magazine writers, self-appointed reformers, delegations representing various organizations, three committees of the state legislature, the Governor's personal emissary, the United States Attorney, the United States Commissioner of Labor, and a congressional committee devoted their time to numerous investigations, thereby giving immense satisfaction to those obscure agitators who were lifted suddenly into the glare of universal notoriety, to the disgust of the town thus dragged into unenviable publicity, and to the discomfiture of the employers.

The legislature of Massachusetts had reduced the hours of work of women and children from fifty-six to fifty-four hours a week. Without making adequate announcement, the employers withheld two hours' pay from the weekly stipend. A large portion of the workers were foreigners, representing eighteen different nationalities, most of them with a wholly inadequate knowledge of English, and all of an inflammable temperament. When they found their pay short, a group marched through the mills, inciting others to join them, and the strike was on. The American Federation of Labor had paid little attention to these workers. There were some trade unions in the mills, but

most of the workers were unorganized except for the fact that the I. W. W. had, about eight months before, gathered several hundred into an industrial union. Yet it does not appear that this union started the strike. It was a case of spontaneous combustion. No sooner had it begun, however, than Joseph J. Ettor, an I. W. W. organizer, hastened to take charge, and succeeded so well that within a few weeks he claimed 7000 members in his union. Ettor proved a crafty, resourceful general, quick in action, magnetic in personality, a linguist who could command his polyglot mob. He was also a successful press agent who exploited fully the unpalatable drinking water provided by the companies, the inadequate sewerage, the unpaved streets, and the practical destitution of many of the workers. The strikers made an attempt to send children to other towns so that they might be better cared for. After several groups had thus been taken away, the city of Lawrence interfered, claiming that many children had been sent without their parents' consent. On the 24th of February, when a group of forty children and their mothers gathered at the railway station to take a train for Philadelphia, the police after due warning refused to let them depart. It was then that the Federal



Government was called upon to take action. The strike committee telegraphed Congress: "Twenty-five thousand striking textile workers and citizens of Lawrence protest against the hideous brutality with which the police handled the women and children of Lawrence this morning. Carrying out the illegal and original orders of the city marshal to prevent free citizens from sending their children out of the city, striking men were knocked down, women and mothers who were trying to protect their children from the onslaught of the police were attacked and clubbed." So widespread was the opinion that unnecessary brutality had taken place that petitions for an investigation poured in upon Congress from many States and numerous organizations.

The whole country was watching the situation. The hearings held by a congressional committee emphasized the stupidity of the employers in arbitrarily curtailing the wage, the inadequacy of the town government in handling the situation, and the cupidity of the I. W. W. leaders in taking advantage of the fears, the ignorance, the inflammability of the workers, and in creating a "terrorism which impregnated the whole city for days." Lawrence became a symbol. It stood for the American

factory town; for municipal indifference and social neglect, for heterogeneity in population, for the tinder pile awaiting the incendiary match.

At Little Falls, New York, a strike occurred in the textile mills in October, 1912, as a result of a reduction of wages due to a fifty-four hour law. No organization was responsible for the strike, but no sooner had the operatives walked out than here also the I. W. W. appeared. The leaders ordered every striker to do something which would involve arrest in order to choke the local jail and the courts. The state authorities investigating the situation reported that "all of those on strike were foreigners and few, if any, could speak or understand the English language, complete control of the strike being in the hands of the I. W. W."

In February, 1913, about 15,000 employees in the rubber works at Akron, Ohio, struck. The introduction of machinery into the manufacture of automobile tires caused a reduction in the piece-work rate in certain shops. One of the companies posted a notice on the 10th of February that this reduction would take effect immediately. No time was given for conference, and it was this sudden arbitrary act which precipitated all the discontent lurking for a long time in the background; and the

employees walked out. The legislative investigating committee reported "there was practically no organization existing among the rubber employees when the strike began. A small local of the Industrial Workers of the World comprised of between fifteen and fifty members had been formed. . . . Simultaneously with the beginning of the strike, organizers of the I. W. W. appeared on the ground inviting and urging the striking employees to unite with their organization." Many of these testified before the public authorities that they had not joined because they believed in the preachings of the organization but because "they hoped through collective action to increase their wages and improve their conditions of employment." The tactics of the strike leaders soon alienated the public, which had at first been inclined towards the strikers, and acts of violence led to the organization of a vigilance committee of one thousand citizens which warned the leaders to leave town.

In February, 1913, some 25,000 workers in the silk mills of Paterson, New Jersey, struck, and here again the I. W. W. repeated its maneuvers. Sympathetic meetings took place in New York and other cities. Daily "experience meetings" were held in Paterson and all sorts of devices were

invented to maintain the fervor of the strikers. The leaders threatened to make Paterson a "howling wilderness," an "industrial graveyard," and "to wipe it off the map." This threat naturally arrayed the citizens against the strikers, over one thousand of whom were lodged in jail before the outbreak was over. Among the five ringleaders arrested and held for the grand jury were Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and Patrick Quinlan, whose trials attracted wide attention. Elizabeth Flynn, an appealing young widow scarcely over twenty-one, testified that she had begun her work as an organizer at the age of sixteen, that she had not incited strikers to violence but had only advised them to picket and to keep their hands in their pockets, "so that detectives could not put stones in them as they had done in other strikes." The jury disagreed and she was discharged. Quinlan, an unusually attractive young man, also a professional I. W. W. agitator, was found guilty of inciting to violence and was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. After serving nine months he was freed because of a monster petition signed by some 20,000 sympathetic persons all over the United States. Clergymen, philanthropists, and prominent public men, were among the signers, as well as

the jurors who convicted and the sheriff who locked up the defendant.

These cases served to fix further public attention upon the nature of the new movement and the sort of revivalists its evangel of violence was producing. Employers steadfastly refused to deal with the I. W. W., although they repeatedly asserted they were willing to negotiate with their employees themselves. After three months of strike and turmoil the mayor of Paterson had said: "The fight which Paterson is making is the fight of the nation. Their agitation has no other object in view but to establish a reign of terror throughout the United States." A large number of thoughtful people all over the land were beginning to share this view.

In New York City a new sort of agitation was devised in the winter of 1913-14 under the captaincy of a young man who quite suddenly found himself widely advertised. Frank Tannenbaum organized an "army of the unemployed," commandeered Rutgers Square as a rendezvous, Fifth Avenue as a parade ground, and churches and parish houses as forts and commissaries. Several of the churches were voluntarily opened to them, but other churches they attempted to enter by

storm. In March, 1914, Tannenbaum led several score into the church of St. Alphonsus while mass was being celebrated. Many arrests followed this bold attempt to emulate the French Revolutionists. Though sympathizers raised \$7500 bail for the ringleader, Tannenbaum loyally refused to accept it as long as any of his "army" remained in jail. Squads of his men entered restaurants, ate their fill, refused to pay, and then found their way to the workhouse. So for several months a handful of unemployed, some of them professional unemployed, held the headlines of the metropolitan papers, rallied to their defense sentimental social sympathizers, and succeeded in calling the attention of the public to a serious industrial condition.

At Granite City, Illinois, another instance of unrest occurred when several thousand laborers in the steel mills, mostly Roumanians and Bulgarians, demanded an increase in wages. When the whistle blew on the appointed morning, they gathered at the gates, refused to enter, and continued to shout "Two dollars a day!" Though the manager feared violence and posted guards, no violence was offered. Suddenly at the end of two hours the men quietly resumed their work, and the management believed

the trouble was over. But for several successive mornings this maneuver was repeated. Strike breakers were then sent for. For a week, however, the work went forward as usual. The order for strike breakers was countermanded. Then came a continued repetition of the early morning strikes until the company gave way.

Nor were the subtler methods of sabotage forgotten in these demonstrations. From many places came reports of emery dust in the gearings of expensive machines. Men boasted of powdered soap emptied into water tanks that fed boilers, of kerosene applied to belting, of railroad switches that had been tampered with. With these and many similar examples before them, the public became convinced that the mere arresting of a few leaders was futile. A mass meeting at Ipswich, Massachusetts, in 1913, declared, as its principle of action, "We have got to meet force with force," and then threatened to run the entire local I. W. W. group out of town. In many towns vigilance committees acted as eyes, ears, and hands for the community. When the community refused to remain neutral, the contest assumed a different aspect and easily became a feud between a small group of militants and the general public.



In the West this contest assumed its most aggressive form. At Spokane, in 1910, the jail was soon filled, and sixty prisoners went on a hunger strike which cost several lives. In the lumber mills of Aberdeen, South Dakota, explosions and riots occurred. In Hoquiam, Washington, a twelve-foot stockade surmounted by barbed wire entanglements failed to protect the mills from the assaults of strikers. At Gray's Harbor, Washington, a citizens' committee cut the electric light wires to darken the meeting place of the I. W. W. and then used axe handles and wagon spokes to drive the members out of town. At Everett, Washington, a strike in the shingle mills led to the expulsion of the I. W. W. The leaders then called for volunteers to invade Everett, and several hundred members sailed from Seattle. They were met at the dock, however, by a large committee of citizens and were informed by the sheriff that they would not be allowed to land. After some parley, the invaders opened fire, and in the course of the shooting that followed the sheriff was seriously wounded, five persons were killed, and many were injured. The boat and its small invading army then returned to Seattle without making a landing at Everett.

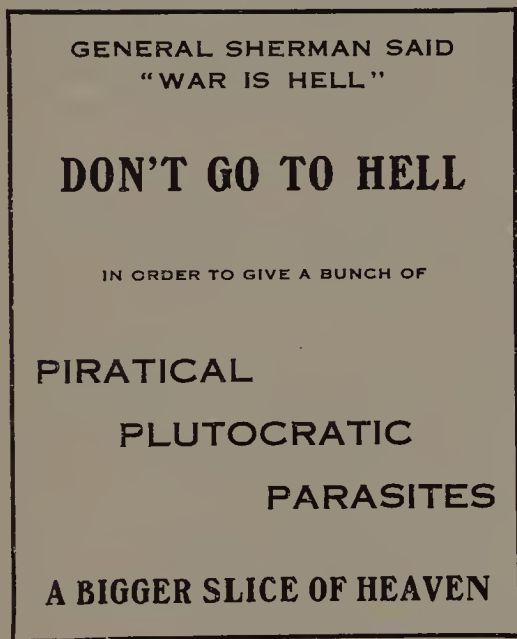
The I. W. W. found an excuse for their riotous action in the refusal of communities to permit them to speak in the streets and public places. This, they claimed, was an invasion of their constitutional right of free speech. The experience of San Diego serves as an example of their "free speech" campaigns. In 1910, I. W. W. agitators began to hold public meetings in the streets, in the course of which their language increased in ferocity until the indignation of the community was aroused. An ordinance was then passed by the city council prohibiting street speaking within the congested portions of the city, but allowing street meetings in other parts of the city if a permit from the police department were first obtained. There was, however, no law requiring the issue of such a permit, and none was granted to the agitators. This restriction of their liberties greatly incensed the agitators, who at once raised the cry of "free speech" and began to hold meetings in defiance of the ordinance. The jail was soon glutted with these apostles of riotous speaking. In order to delay the dispatch of the court's overcrowded calendar, every one demanded a jury trial. The mayor of the town then received a telegram from the general secretary of the organization which disclosed their

tactics: "This fight will be continued until free speech is established in San Diego if it takes twenty thousand members and twenty years to do so." The national membership of the I. W. W. had been drafted as an invading army, to be a constant irritation to the city until it surrendered. The police asserted that "there are bodies of men leaving all parts of the country for San Diego" for the purpose of defying the city authorities and overwhelming its municipal machinery. A committee of vigilantes armed with "revolvers, knives, night-sticks, black jacks, and black snakes," supported by the local press and commercial bodies, undertook to run the unwelcome guests out of town. That this was not done gently is clearly disclosed by subsequent official evidence. Culprits were loaded into auto trucks at night, taken to the county line, made to kiss the flag, sing the national anthem, run the gauntlet between rows of vigilantes provided with cudgels and, after thus proving their patriotism under duress, were told never to return.

"There is an unwritten law," one of the local papers at this time remarked, "that permits a citizen to avenge his outraged honor. There is an unwritten law that permits a community to defend itself by any means in its power, lawful or unlawful,

against any evil which the operation of the written law is inadequate to oppose or must oppose by slow, tedious, and unnecessarily expensive proceedings." So this municipal homeopathy of curing lawlessness with lawlessness received public sanction.

With the declaration of war against Germany in April, 1917, hostility to the I. W. W. on the part of the American public was intensified. The members of the organization opposed war. Their leaflet *War and the Workers*, bore this legend:



Soon rumors abounded that German money was being used to aid the I. W. W. in their plots. In

Oklahoma, Texas, Illinois, Kansas, and other States, members of the organization were arrested for failure to comply with the draft law. The governors of Oregon, Washington, Montana, Idaho, and Nevada met to plan laws for suppressing the I. W. W. Similar legislation was urged upon Congress. Senator Thomas, in a report to the Senate, accused the I. W. W. of coöperating with German agents in the copper mines and harvest fields of the West by inciting the laborers to strikes and to the destruction of food and material. Popular opinion in the West inclined to the view of Senator Poin-dexter of Washington when he said that "most of the I. W. W. leaders are outlaws or ought to be made outlaws because of their official utterances, inflammatory literature and acts of violence." Indeed, scores of communities in 1917 took matters into their own hands. Over a thousand I. W. W. strikers in the copper mines of Bisbee, Arizona, were loaded into freight cars and shipped over the state line. In Billings, Montana, one leader was horsewhipped, and two others were hanged until they were unconscious. In Tulsa, Oklahoma, a group of seventeen members were taken from policemen, thoroughly flogged, tarred, feathered, and driven out of town by vigilantes.

The Federal Government, after an extended inquiry through the secret service, raided the Detroit headquarters of the I. W. W., where a plot to tie up lake traffic was brewing. The Chicago offices were raided some time later; over one hundred and sixty leaders of the organization from all parts of the country were indicted as a result of the examination of the wagon-load of papers and documents seized. As a result, 166 indictments were returned. Of these 99 defendants were found guilty by the trial jury, 16 were dismissed during the trial, and 51 were dismissed before the trial. In Cleveland, Buffalo, and other lake ports similar disclosures were made, and everywhere the organization fell under popular and official suspicion.

In many other portions of the country members of the I. W. W. were tried for conspiracy under the Federal espionage act. In January, 1919, a trial jury in Sacramento found 46 defendants guilty. The offense in the majority of these cases consisted in opposing military service rather than in overt acts against the Government. But in May and June, 1919, the country was startled by a series of bomb outrages aimed at the United States Attorney-General, certain Federal district judges, and other leading public personages, which were

evidently the result of centralized planning and were executed by members of the I. W. W., aided very considerably by foreign Bolsheviks.

In spite of its spectacular warfare and its monopoly of newspaper headlines, the I. W. W. has never been numerically strong. The first convention claimed a membership of 60,000. All told, the organization has issued over 200,000 cards since its inception, but this total never constituted its membership at any given time, for no more fluctuating group ever existed. When the I. W. W. fosters a strike of considerable proportions, the membership rapidly swells, only to shrink again when the strike is over. This temporary membership consists mostly of foreign workmen who are recent immigrants. What may be termed the permanent membership is difficult to estimate. In 1913 there were about 14,000 members. In 1917 the membership was estimated at 75,000. Though this is probably a maximum rather than an average, nevertheless the members are mostly young men whose revolutionary ardor counterbalances their want in numbers. It is, moreover, an organization that has a wide penumbra. It readily attracts the discontented, the unemployed, the man without a horizon. In an instant it can lay



a fire and put an entire police force on the *qui vive*.

The organization has always been in financial straits. The source of its power is to be sought elsewhere. Financially bankrupt and numerically unstable, the I. W. W. relies upon the brazen cupidity of its stratagems and the habitual timorousness of society for its power. It is this self-seeking disregard of constituted authority that has given a handful of bold and crafty leaders such prominence in the recent literature of fear. And the members of this industrial Ku Klux Klan, these American Bolsheviki, assume to be the "conscious minority" which is to lead the ranks of labor into the Canaan of industrial bliss.

## CHAPTER X

### LABOR AND POLITICS

IN a democracy it is possible for organized labor to extend its influence far beyond the confines of a mere trade policy. It can move the political mechanism directly in proportion to its capacity to enlist public opinion. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that labor is eager to take part in politics or that labor parties were early organized. They were, however, doomed to failure, for no workingman's party can succeed, except in isolated localities, without the coöperation of other social and political forces. Standing alone as a political entity, labor has met only rebuff and defeat at the hands of the American voter.

The earlier attempts at direct political action were local. In Philadelphia a workingman's party was organized in 1828 as a result of the disappointment of the Mechanics' Union at its failure to achieve its ambitions by strikes. At a public

meeting it was resolved to support only such candidates for the legislature and city council as would pledge themselves to the interests of "the working classes." The city was organized, and a delegate convention was called which nominated a ticket of thirty candidates for city and county offices. But nineteen of these nominees were also on the Jackson ticket, and ten on the Adams ticket; and both of these parties used the legend "Working Man's Ticket," professing to favor a shorter working day. The isolated labor candidates received only from 229 to 539 votes, while the Jackson party vote ranged from 3800 to 7000 and the Adams party vote from 2500 to 3800. So that labor's first excursion into politics revealed the eagerness of the older parties to win the labor vote, and the futility of relying on a separate organization, except for propaganda purposes.

Preparatory to their next campaign, the workingmen organized political clubs in all the wards of Philadelphia. In 1829 they nominated thirty-two candidates for local offices, of whom nine received the endorsement of the Federalists and three that of the Democrats. The workingmen fared better in this election, polling nearly 2000 votes in the county and electing sixteen candidates. So

encouraged were they by this success that they attempted to nominate a state ticket, but the dominant parties were too strong. In 1831 the workingmen's candidates, who were not endorsed by the older parties, received less than 400 votes in Philadelphia. After this year the party vanished.

New York also early had an illuminating experience in labor politics. In 1829 the workingmen of the city launched a political venture under the immediate leadership of an agitator by the name of Thomas Skidmore. Skidmore set forth his social panacea in a book whose elongated title betrays his secret: *The Rights of Man to Property! Being a Proposition to Make it Equal among the Adults of the Present Generation; and to Provide for its Equal Transmission to Every Individual of Each Succeeding Generation, on Arriving at the Age of Maturity.* The party manifesto began with the startling declaration that "all human society, our own as well as every other, is constructed radically wrong." The new party proposed to right this defect by an equal distribution of the land and by an elaborate system of public education. Associated with Skidmore were Robert Dale Owen and Frances Wright of the *Free Enquirer*, a paper advocating all sorts of extreme social and economic doctrines. It was

not strange, therefore, that the new party was at once connected, in the public mind, with all the erratic vagaries of these Apostles of Change. It was called the "Fanny Wright ticket" and the "Infidel Ticket." Every one forgot that it aimed to be the workingman's ticket. The movement, however, was supported by *The Working Man's Advocate*, a new journal that soon reached a wide influence.

There now appeared an eccentric Quaker, Russell Comstock by name, to center public attention still more upon the new party. As a candidate for the legislature, he professed an alarmingly advanced position, for he believed that the State ought to establish free schools where handicrafts and morals, but not religion, should be taught; that husband and wife should be equals before the law; that a mechanics' lien and bankruptcy law should be passed; and that by wise graduations all laws for the collection of debts should be repealed. At a meeting held at the City Hall, for the further elucidation of his "pure Republicanism," he was greeted by a great throng but was arrested for disturbing the peace. He received less than one hundred and fifty votes, but his words went far to excite, on the one hand, the interest of the laboring

classes in reform, and, on the other hand, the determination of the conservative classes to defeat "a ticket got up openly and avowedly," as one newspaper said, "in opposition to all banks, in opposition to social order, in opposition to rights of property."

Elections at this time lasted three days. On the first day there was genuine alarm at the large vote cast for "the Infidels." Thoughtful citizens were importuned to go to the polls, and on the second and third days they responded in sufficient numbers to compass the defeat of the entire ticket, excepting only one candidate for the legislature.

The Workingman's party contained too many zealots to hold together. After the election of 1829 a meeting was called to revise the party platform. The more conservative element prevailed and omitted the agrarian portions of the platform. Skidmore, who was present, attempted to protest, but his voice was drowned by the clamor of the audience. He then started a party of his own, which he called the Original Workingman's party but which became known as the Agrarian party. The majority endeavored to rectify their position in the community by an address to the people. "We take this opportunity," they said, "to aver, whatever

may be said to the contrary by ignorant or designing individuals or biased presses, that we have no desire or intention of disturbing the rights of property in individuals or the public." In the meantime Robert Dale Owen and Fanny Wright organized a party of their own, endorsing an extreme form of state paternalism over children. This State Guardianship Plan, as it was called, aimed to "regenerate America in a generation" and to "make but one class out of the many that now envy and despise each other."

There were, then, three workingmen's parties in New York, none of which, however, succeeded in gaining an influential position in state politics. After 1830 all these parties disappeared, but not without leaving a legacy of valuable experience. *The Working Man's Advocate* discovered political wisdom when it confessed that "whether these measures are carried by the formation of a new party, by the reform of an old one, or by the abolishment of party altogether, is of comparative unimportance."

In New England, the workingmen's political endeavors were joined with those of the farmers under the agency of the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and Workingmen. This



organization was initiated in 1830 by the workingmen of Woodstock, Vermont, and their journal, the *Working Man's Gazette*, became a medium of agitation which affected all the New England manufacturing towns as well as many farming communities. "Woodstock meetings," as they were called, were held everywhere and aroused both workingmen and farmers to form a new political party. *The Springfield Republican* summarized the demands of the new party thus:

The avowed objects generally seem to be to abolish imprisonment for debt, the abolishment of litigation, and in lieu thereof the settlement of disputes by reference to neighbors; to establish some more equal and universal system of public education; to diminish the salaries and extravagance of public officers; to support no men for offices of public trust, but farmers, mechanics, and what the party call "working men"; and to elevate the character of this class by mental instruction and mental improvement. . . . Much is said against the wealth and aristocracy of the land, their influence, and the undue influence of lawyers and other professional men. . . . The most of these objects appear very well on paper and we believe they are already sustained by the good sense of the people. . . . What is most ridiculous about this party is, that in many places where the greatest noise is made about it, the most indolent and most worthless persons, men of no trade or useful occupation have taken the lead.

We cannot of course answer for the character for industry of many places where this party is agitated: but we believe the great body of our own community, embracing every class and profession, may justly be called workingmen: nor do we believe enough can be found who are not such, to make even a decent party of drones.

In the early thirties many towns and cities in Massachusetts, Vermont, Maine, Connecticut, and Rhode Island elected workingmen's candidates to local offices, usually with the help of small tradespeople. In 1833 and 1834 the workingmen of Massachusetts put a state ticket in the field which polled about 2000 votes, and in Boston a workingman's party was organized, but it did not gather much momentum and soon disappeared.

These local and desultory attempts at forming a separate labor party failed as partisan movements. The labor leader proved an inefficient amateur when matched against the shrewd and experienced party manipulator; nor was there a sufficient class homogeneity to keep the labor vote together; and, even if it had so been united, there were not enough labor votes to make a majority. So the labor candidate had to rely on the good will of other classes in order to win his election. And this support was not forthcoming. Americans have, thus far,

always looked with suspicion upon a party that represented primarily the interests of only one class. This tendency shows a healthy instinct founded upon the fundamental conception of society as a great unity whose life and progress depend upon the freedom of all its diverse parts.

It is not necessary to assume, as some observers have done, that these petty political excursions wrecked the labor movement of that day. It was perfectly natural that the laborer, when he awoke to the possibilities of organization and found himself possessed of unlimited political rights, should seek a speedy salvation in the ballot box. He took, by impulse, the partisan shortcut and soon found himself lost in the slough of party intrigue. On the other hand, it should not be concluded that these intermittent attempts to form labor parties were without political significance. The politician is usually blind to every need except the need of his party; and the one permanent need of his party is votes. A demand backed by reason will usually find him inert; a demand backed by votes galvanizes him into nervous attention. When, therefore, it was apparent that there was a labor vote, even though a small one, the demands of this vote were not to be ignored, especially in States

where the parties were well balanced and the scale was tipped by a few hundred votes. Within a few decades after the political movement began, many States had passed lien laws, had taken active measures to establish efficient free schools, had abolished imprisonment for debt, had made legislative inquiry into factory conditions, and had recognized the ten-hour day. These had been the leading demands of organized labor, and they had been brought home to the public conscience, in part at least, by the influence of the workingmen's votes.

It was not until after the Civil War that labor achieved sufficient national homogeneity to attempt seriously the formation of a national party. In the light of later events it is interesting to sketch briefly the development of the political power of the workingman. The National Labor Union at its congress of 1866 resolved "that, so far as political action is concerned, each locality should be governed by its own policy, whether to run an independent ticket of workingmen, or to use political parties already existing, but at all events to cast no vote except for men pledged to the interests of labor." The issue then seemed clear enough. But six years later the Labor Reform party struck out

on an independent course and held its first and only national convention. Seventeen States were represented.<sup>1</sup> The Labor party, however, had yet to learn how hardly won are independence and unity in any political organization. Rumors of pernicious intermeddling by the Democratic and Republican politicians were afloat, and it was charged that the Pennsylvania delegates had come on passes issued by the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Judge David Davis of Illinois, then a member of the United States Supreme Court, was nominated for President and Governor Joel Parker of New Jersey for Vice-President. Both declined, however, and Charles O'Connor of New York, the candidate of "the Straight-Out Democrats," was named for President, but no nomination was made for Vice-President. Considering the subsequent phenomenal growth of the labor vote, it is worth noting in passing that O'Connor received only 29,489 votes and that these embraced both the labor and the so-called "straight" Democratic strength.

For some years the political labor movement

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that in this first National Labor Party Convention a motion favoring government ownership and the referendum was voted down.

lost its independent character and was absorbed by the Greenback party which offered a meeting-ground for discontented farmers and restless workmen. In 1876 the party nominated for President the venerable Peter Cooper, who received about eighty thousand votes — most of them probably cast by farmers. During this time the leaders of the labor movement were serving a political apprenticeship and were learning the value of co-operation. On February 22, 1878, a conference held at Toledo, Ohio, including eight hundred delegates from twenty-eight States, perfected an alliance between the Labor Reform and Greenback parties and invited all “patriotic citizens to unite in an effort to secure financial reform and industrial emancipation.” Financial reform meant the adoption of the well-known greenback free silver policy. Industrial emancipation involved the enactment of an eight-hour law; the inspection of workshops, factories, and mines; the regulation of interstate commerce; a graduated federal income tax; the prohibition of the importation of alien contract labor; the forfeiture of the unused portion of the princely land grants to railroads; and the direct participation of the people in government. These fundamental issues were included in the demands



of subsequent labor and populist parties, and some of them were bequeathed to the Progressive party of a later date. The convention was thus a forerunner of genuine reform, for its demands were based upon industrial needs. For the moment it made a wide popular appeal. In the state elections of 1878 about a million votes were polled by the party candidates. The bulk of these were farmers' votes cast in the Middle and Far West, though in the East, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York, Maine, and New Jersey cast a considerable vote for the party.

With high expectations the new party entered the campaign of 1880. It had over a dozen members in Congress, active organizations in nearly every State, and ten thousand local clubs. General James B. Weaver, the presidential nominee of the party, was the first candidate to make extensive campaign journeys into distant sections of the country. His energetic canvass netted him only 308,578 votes, most of which came from the West. The party was distinctly a farmers' party. In 1884, it nominated the lurid Ben Butler who had been, according to report, "ejected from the Democratic party and booted out of the Republican." His demagogic appeals, however, brought him not



much more than half as many votes as the party received at the preceding election, and helped to end the political career of the Greenbackers.

With the power of the farmers on the wane, the balance began to shift. There now followed a number of attempts to organize labor in the Union Labor party, the United Labor party, the Progressive Labor party, the American Reform party, and the Tax Reformers. There were still numerous farmers' organizations such as the Farmers' Alliance, the Anti-Monopolists, the Homesteaders, and others, but they were no longer the dominant force. Under the stimulus of the labor unions, delegates representing the Knights of Labor, the Grangers, the Anti-Monopolists, and other farmers' organizations, met in Cincinnati on February 22, 1887, and organized the National Union Labor party.<sup>1</sup> The following May the party held its only nominating convention. Alson J. Streeter of Illinois was named for President and Samuel Evans of Texas for Vice-President. The platform of the party was based upon the prevalent economic and political discontent. Farmers were overmortgaged, laborers were underpaid, and the poor were growing poorer, while the rich were daily growing richer.

<sup>1</sup> McKee, *National Conventions and Platforms*, p. 251.

“The paramount issues,” the new party declared, “are the abolition of usury, monopoly, and trusts, and we denounce the Republican and Democratic parties for creating and perpetuating these monstrous evils.”

In the meantime Henry George, whose *Progress and Poverty* had made a profound impression upon public thought, had become in 1886 a candidate for mayor of New York City, and polled the phenomenal total of 68,110 votes, while Theodore Roosevelt, the Republican candidate, received 60,435, and Abram S. Hewitt, the successful Democratic candidate, polled 90,552. The evidence of popular support which attended Henry George’s brief political career was the prelude to a national effort which culminated in the formation of the United Labor party. Its platform was similar to that of the Union party, except that the single tax now made its appearance. This method contemplated the “taxation of land according to its value and not according to its area, to devote to common use and benefit those values which arise, not from the exertion of the individual, but from the growth of society,” and the abolition of all taxes on industry and its products. But it was apparent from the similarity of their platforms and the geographical

distribution of their candidates that the two labor parties were competing for the same vote. At a conference held in Chicago to effect a union, however, the Union Labor party insisted on the complete effacement of the other ticket and the single taxers refused to submit. In the election which followed, the Union Labor party received about 147,000 votes, largely from the South and West and evidently the old Greenback vote, while the United party polled almost no votes outside of Illinois and New York. Neither party survived the result of this election.

In December, 1889, committees representing the Knights of Labor and the Farmers' Alliance met in St. Louis to come to some agreement on political policies. Owing to the single tax predilection of the Knights, the two organizations were unable to enter into a close union, but they nevertheless did agree that "the legislative committees of both organizations [would] act in concert before Congress for the purpose of securing the enactment of laws in harmony with their demands." This coöperation was a forerunner of the People's party or, as it was commonly called, the Populist party, the largest third party that had taken the field since the Civil War. Throughout the West and the

South political conditions now were feverish. Old party majorities were overturned, and a new type of Congressman invaded Washington. When the first national convention of the People's party met in Omaha on July 2, 1892, the outlook was bright. General Weaver was nominated for President and James G. Field of Virginia for Vice-President. The platform rehabilitated Greenbackism in cogent phrases, demanded government control of railroads and telegraph and telephone systems, the reclamation of land held by corporations, an income tax, the free coinage of silver and gold "at the present legal ratio of sixteen to one," and postal savings banks. In a series of resolutions which were not a part of the platform but were nevertheless "expressive of the sentiment of this convention," the party declared itself in sympathy "with the efforts of organized workingmen to shorten the hours of labor"; it condemned "the fallacy of protecting American labor under the present system, which opens our ports to the pauper and criminal classes of the world and crowds out our wage-earners"; and it opposed the Pinkerton system of capitalistic espionage as "a menace to our liberties." The party formally declared itself to be a "union of the labor forces of the United States,"

for "the interests of rural and city labor are the same; their enemies identical."

These national movements prior to 1896 are not, however, an adequate index of the political strength of labor in partisan endeavor. Organized labor was more of a power in local and state elections, perhaps because in these cases its pressure was more direct, perhaps because it was unable to cope with the great national organization of the older parties. During these years of effort to gain a footing in the Federal Government, there are numerous examples of the success of the labor party in state elections. As early as 1872 the labor reformers nominated state tickets in Pennsylvania and Connecticut. In 1875 they nominated Wendell Phillips for Governor of Massachusetts. In 1878, in coalition with the Greenbackers, they elected many state officers throughout the West. Ten years later, when the Union Labor party was at its height, labor candidates were successful in several municipalities. In 1888 labor tickets were nominated in many Western States, including Colorado, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Of these Kansas cast the largest labor vote, with nearly 36,000, and Missouri came next with 15,400. In

the East, however, the showing of the party in state elections was far less impressive.

In California the political labor movement achieved a singular prominence. In 1877 the labor situation in San Francisco became acute because of the prevalence of unemployment. Grumblings of dissatisfaction soon gave way to parades and informal meetings at which imported Chinese labor and the rich "nobs," the supposed dual cause of all the trouble, were denounced in lurid language. The agitation, however, was formless until the necessary leader appeared in Dennis Kearney, a native of Cork County, Ireland. For fourteen years he had been a sailor, had risen rapidly to first officer of a clipper ship, and then had settled in San Francisco as a drayman. He was temperate and industrious in his personal life, and possessed a clear eye, a penetrating voice, the vocabulary of one versed in the crude socialistic pamphlets of his day, and, in spite of certain domineering habits bred in the sailor, the winning graces of his nationality.

Kearney appeared at meetings on the vacant lots known as the "sand lots," in front of the City Hall of San Francisco, and advised the discontented ones to "wrest the government from the hands of the rich and place it in those of the people." On



September 12, 1877, he rallied a group of unemployed around him and organized the Workingman's Trade and Labor Union of San Francisco. On the 5th of October, at a great public meeting, the Workingman's party of California was formed and Kearney was elected president. The platform adopted by the party proposed to place the government in the hands of the people, to get rid of the Chinese, to destroy the money power, to "provide decently for the poor and unfortunate, the weak and the helpless," and "to elect none but competent workingmen and their friends to any office whatever. . . . When we have 10,000 members we shall have the sympathy and support of 20,000 other workingmen. This party," concluded the pronouncement, "will exhaust all peaceable means of attaining its ends, but it will not be denied justice, when it has the power to enforce it. It will encourage no riot or outrage, but it will not volunteer to repress or put down or arrest or prosecute the hungry and impatient, who manifest their hatred of the Chinamen by a crusade against 'John,' or those who employ him. Let those who raise the storm by their selfishness, suppress it themselves. If they dare raise the devil, let them meet him face to face. We will not help them."



In advocating these views, Kearney held meeting after meeting, each rhetorically more violent than the last, until on the 3d of November he was arrested. This martyrdom in the cause of labor increased his power, and when he was released he was drawn by his followers in triumph through the streets on one of his own drays. His language became more and more extreme. He bludgeoned the "thieving politicians" and the "blood-sucking capitalists," and he advocated "judicious hanging" and "discretionary shooting." The City Council passed an ordinance intended to gag him; the legislature enacted an extremely harsh riot act; a body of volunteers patrolled the streets of the city; a committee of safety was organized. On January 5, 1878, Kearney and a number of associates were indicted, arrested, and released on bail. When the trial jury acquitted Kearney, what may be called the terrorism of the movement attained its height, but it fortunately spent itself in violent adjectives.

The Workingman's party, however, elected a workingman mayor of San Francisco, joined forces with the Grangers, and elected a majority of the members of the state constitutional convention which met in Sacramento on September 28, 1878.

This was a notable triumph for a third party. The framing of a new constitution gave this coalition of farmers and workingmen an unusual opportunity to assail the evils which they declared infested the State. The instrument which they drafted bound the state legislature with numerous restrictions and made lobbying a felony; it reorganized the courts, placed innumerable limitations upon corporations, forbade the loaning of the credit or property of the State to corporations, and placed a state commission in charge of the railroads, which had been perniciously active in state politics. Alas for these visions of reform! A few years after the adoption of this new constitution by California, Hubert H. Bancroft wrote:

Those objects which it particularly aimed at, it failed to achieve. The effect upon corporations disappointed its authors and supporters. Many of them were strong enough still to defy state power and evade state laws, in protecting their interests, and this they did without scruple. The relation of capital and labor is even more strained than before the constitution was adopted. Capital soon recovered from a temporary intimidation. . . . Labor still uneasy was still subject to the inexorable law of supply and demand. Legislatures were still to be approached by agents. . . . Chinese were still employed in digging and grading. The state board of railroad Commissioners was a

useless expense, . . . being as wax in the hands of the companies it was set to watch.<sup>1</sup>

After the collapse of the Populist party, there is to be discerned in labor politics a new departure, due primarily to the attitude of the American Federation of Labor in partisan matters, and secondarily to the rise of political socialism. A socialistic party deriving its support almost wholly from foreign-born workmen had appeared in a few of the large cities in 1877, but it was not until 1892 that a national party was organized, and not until after the collapse of Populism that it assumed some political importance.

In August, 1892, a Socialist-Labor convention which was held in New York City nominated candidates for President and Vice-President and adopted a platform that contained, besides the familiar economic demands of socialism, the rather unusual suggestion that the Presidency, Vice-Presidency, and Senate of the United States be abolished and that an executive board be established "whose members are to be elected, and may at any time be recalled, by the House of Representatives, as the only legislative body, the States and municipalities to adopt corresponding

<sup>1</sup> *Works* (vol. xxiv): *History of California*, vol. VII, p. 404.

amendments to their constitutions and statutes.” Under the title of the Socialist-Labor party, this ticket polled 21,532 votes in 1892, and in 1896, 36,373 votes.

In 1897 the inevitable split occurred in the Socialist ranks. Eugene V. Debs, the radical labor leader, who, as president of the American Railway Union, had directed the Pullman strike and had become a martyr to the radical cause through his imprisonment for violating the orders of a Federal Court, organized the Social-Democratic party. In 1900 Debs was nominated for President, and Job Harri-man, representing the older wing, for Vice-President. The ticket polled 94,864 votes. The Socialist-Labor party nominated a ticket of their own which received only 33,432 votes. Eventually this party shrank to a mere remnant, while the Social Democratic party became generally known as the Socialist party. Debs became their candidate in three successive elections. In 1904 and 1908 his vote hovered around 400,000. In 1910 congressional and local elections spurred the Socialists to hope for a million votes in 1912 but they fell somewhat short of this mark. Debs received 901,873 votes, the largest number which a Socialist candidate has ever yet received. Benson,

the presidential candidate in 1916, received 590,579 votes.<sup>1</sup>

In the meantime, the influence of the Socialist labor vote in particular localities vastly increased. In 1910 Milwaukee elected a Socialist mayor by a plurality of seven thousand, sent Victor Berger to Washington as the first Socialist Congressman, and elected labor-union members as five of the twelve Socialist councilmen, thus revealing the sympathy of the working class for the cause. On January 1, 1912, over three hundred towns and cities had one or more Socialist officers. The estimated Socialist vote of these localities was 1,500,000. The 1039 Socialist officers included 56 mayors, 205 aldermen and councilmen, and 148 school officers. This was not a sectional vote but represented New England and the far West, the oldest commonwealths and the newest, the North and the South, and cities filled with foreign workingmen as well as staid towns controlled by retired farmers and shopkeepers.

When the United States entered the Great War, the Socialist party became a reservoir for all the unsavory disloyalties loosened by the shock of the

<sup>1</sup> The Socialist vote is stated differently by McKee, *National Conventions and Platforms*. The above figures, to 1912, are taken from Stanwood's *History of the Presidency*, and for 1912 and 1916 from the *World Almanac*.

great conflict. Pacifists and pro-Germans found a common refuge under its red banner. In the New York mayoralty elections in 1917 these Socialists cast nearly one-fourth of the votes, and in the Wisconsin senatorial election in 1918 Victor Berger, their standard-bearer, swept Milwaukee, carried seven counties, and polled over one hundred thousand votes. On the other hand, a large number of American Socialists, under the leadership of William English Walling and John Spargo, vigorously espoused the national cause and subordinated their economic and political theories to their loyalty.

The Socialists have repeatedly attempted to make official inroads upon organized labor. They have the sympathy of the I. W. W., the remnant of the Knights of Labor, and the more radical trades unions, but from the American Federation of Labor they have met only rebuff. A number of state federations, especially in the Middle West, not a few city centrals, and some sixteen national unions, have officially approved of the Socialist programme, but the Federation has consistently refused such an endorsement.

The political tactics assumed by the Federation discountenance a distinct labor party movement, as long as the old parties are willing to subserve the



ends of the unions. This self-restraint does not mean that the Federation is not "in politics." On the contrary, it is constantly vigilant and aggressive and it engages every year in political maneuvers without, however, having a partisan organization of its own. At its annual conventions it has time and again urged local and state branches to scrutinize the records of legislative candidates and to see that only friends of union labor receive the union laborer's ballot. In 1897 it "firmly and unequivocally" favored "the independent use of the ballot by trade unionists and workmen united regardless of party, that we may elect men from our own ranks to write new laws and administer them along lines laid down in the legislative demands of the American Federation of Labor and at the same time secure an impartial judiciary that will not govern us by arbitrary injunctions of the courts, nor act as the pliant tool of corporate wealth." And in 1906 it determined, first, to defeat all candidates who are either hostile or indifferent to labor's demands; second, if neither party names such candidates, then to make independent labor nominations; third, in every instance to support "the men who have shown themselves to be friendly to labor."



With great astuteness, perseverance, and alertness, the Federation has pursued this method to its uttermost possibilities. In Washington it has met with singular success, reaching a high-water mark in the first Wilson Administration, with the passage of the Clayton bill and the eight-hour railroad bill. After this action, a great New York daily lamented that "Congress is a subordinate branch of the American Federation of Labor. . . . The unsleeping watchmen of organized labor know how intrepid most Congressmen are when threatened with the 'labor vote.' The American laborites don't have to send men to Congress as their British brethren do to the House of Commons. From the galleries they watch the proceedings. They are mighty in committee rooms. They reason with the recalcitrant. They fight opponents in their Congress districts. There are no abler or more potent politicians than the labor leaders out of Congress. Why should rulers like Mr. Gompers and Mr. Furuseth<sup>1</sup> go to Congress? They are a Super-Congress."

Many Congressmen have felt the retaliatory power of the Federation. Even such powerful leaders as Congressman Littlefield of Maine and

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Furuseth, the president of the Seamen's Union and reputed author of the Seaman's Act of 1915.

Speaker Cannon were compelled to exert their utmost to overcome union opposition. The Federation has been active in seating union men in Congress. In 1908 there were six union members in the House; in 1910 there were ten; in 1912 there were seventeen. The Secretary of Labor himself holds a union card. Nor has the Federation shrunk from active participation in the presidential lists. It bitterly opposed President Roosevelt when he espoused the open shop in the Government Printing Office; and in 1908 it openly espoused the Democratic ticket.

In thus maintaining a sort of grand partisan neutrality, the Federation not only holds in numerous instances the balance of power but it makes party fealty its slave and avoids the costly luxury of maintaining a separate national organization of its own. The all-seeing lobby which it maintains at Washington is a prototype of what one may discern in most state capitals when the legislature is in session. The legislative programmes adopted by the various state labor bodies are metamorphosed into demands, and well organized committees are present to coöperate with the labor members who sit in the legislature. The unions, through their steering committee, select with caution the

members who are to introduce the labor bills and watch paternally over every stage in the progress of a measure.

Most of this legislative output has been strictly protective of union interests. Labor, like all other interests that aim to use the power of government, has not been wholly altruistic in its motives, especially since in recent years it has found itself matched against such powerful organizations of employers as the Manufacturers' Association, the National Erectors' Association, and the Metal Trades Association. In fact, in nearly every important industry the employers have organized for defensive and offensive purposes. These organizations match committee with committee, lobby with lobby, add espionage to open warfare, and issue effective literature in behalf of their open shop propaganda.

The voluminous labor codes of such great manufacturing communities as Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois, reflect a new and enlarged conception of the modern State. Labor has generally favored measures that extend the inquisitional and regulative functions of the State, excepting where this extension seemed to interfere with the autonomy of labor itself. Workshops,

mines, factories, and other places of employment are now minutely inspected, and innumerable sanitary and safety provisions are enforced. A workman's compensation law removes from the employee's mind his anxiety for the fate of his family if he should be disabled. The labor contract, long extolled as the ægis of economic liberty, is no longer free from state vigilance. The time and method of paying wages are ordered by the State, and in certain industries the hours of labor are fixed by law. Women and children are the special protégés of this new State, and great care is taken that they shall be engaged only in employment suitable to their strength and under an environment that will not ruin their health.

The growing social control of the individual is significant, for it is not only the immediate conditions of labor that have come under public surveillance. Where and how the workman lives is no longer a matter of indifference to the public, nor what sort of schooling his children get, what games they play, and what motion pictures they see. The city, in coöperation with the State, now provides nurses, dentists, oculists, and surgeons, as well as teachers for the children. This local paternalism increases yearly in its solicitude and receives the

eager sanction of the labor members of city councils. The State has also set up elaborate machinery for observing all phases of the labor situation and for gathering statistics and other information that should be helpful in framing labor laws, and has also established state employment agencies and boards of conciliation and arbitration.

This machinery of mediation is significant not because of what it has already accomplished but as evidence of the realization on the part of the State that labor disputes are not merely the concern of the two parties to the labor contract. Society has finally come to realize that, in the complex of the modern State, it also is vitally concerned, and, in despair at thousands of strikes every year, with their wastage and their aftermath of bitterness, it has attempted to interpose its good offices as mediator.

The modern labor laws cannot be credited, however, to labor activity alone. The new social atmosphere has provided a congenial *milieu* for this vast extension of state functions. The philanthropist, the statistician, and the sociologist have become potent allies of the labor-legislator; and such non-labor organizations, as the American Association for Labor Legislation, have added

their momentum to the movement. New ideals of social coöperation have been established, and new conceptions of the responsibilities of private ownership have been evolved.

While labor organizations have succeeded rather readily in bending the legislative power to their wishes, the military arm of the executive and the judiciary which ultimately enforce the command of the State have been beyond their reach. To bend these branches of the government to its will, organized labor has fought a persistent and aggressive warfare. Decisions of the courts which do not sustain union contentions are received with great disfavor. The open shop decisions of the United States Supreme Court are characterized as unfair and partisan and are vigorously opposed in all the labor journals. It is not, however, until the sanction of public opinion eventually backs the attitude of the unions that the laws and their interpretation can conform entirely to the desires of labor.

The chief grievance of organized labor against the courts is their use of the injunction to prevent boycotts and strikes. "Government by injunction" is the complaint of the unions and it is based upon the common, even reckless, use of a writ which was in origin and intent a high and rarely

used prerogative of the Court of Chancery. What was in early times a powerful weapon in the hands of the Crown against riotous assemblies and threatened lawlessness was invoked in 1868 by an English court as a remedy against industrial disturbances.<sup>1</sup> Since the Civil War the American courts in rapidly increasing numbers have used this weapon, and the Damascus blade of equity has been transformed into a bludgeon in the hands even of magistrates of inferior courts.

The prime objection which labor urges against this use of the injunction is that it deprives the defendant of a jury trial when his liberty is at stake. The unions have always insisted that the law should be so modified that this right would accompany all injunctions growing out of labor disputes. Such a denatured injunction, however, would defeat the purpose of the writ; but the union leader maintains, on the other hand, that he is placed unfairly at a disadvantage, when an employer can command for his own aid in an industrial dispute the swift and sure arm of a law originally intended for a very different purpose. The imprisonment of Debs during the Pullman strike for disobeying a Federal injunction brought the issue vividly before

<sup>1</sup> *Springfield Spinning Company vs. Riley*, L. R. 6 Eq. 551.



the public; and the sentencing of Gompers, Mitchell, and Morrison to prison terms for violating the Buck's Stove injunction produced new waves of popular protest. Occasional dissenting opinions by judges and the gradual conviction of lawyers and of society that some other tribunal than a court of equity or even a court of law would be more suitable for the settling of labor disputes is indicative of the change ultimately to be wrought in practice.

The unions are also violently opposed to the use of military power by the State during strikes. Not only can the militia be called out to enforce the mandates of the State but whenever Federal interference is justified the United States troops may be sent to the scene of turmoil. After the period of great labor troubles culminating in the Pullman strike, many States reorganized their militia into national guards. The armories built for the accommodation of the guard were called by the unions "plutocracy's bastiles," and the mounted State constabulary organized in 1906 by Pennsylvania were at once dubbed "American Cossacks." Several States following the example of Pennsylvania have encountered the bitterest hostility on the part of the labor unions. Already opposition

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to the militia has proceeded so far that some unions have forbidden their members to perform militia service when called to do strike duty, and the military readjustments involved in the Great War have profoundly affected the relation of the State to organized labor. Following the signing of the armistice, a movement for the organization of an American Labor party patterned after the British Labour party gained rapid momentum, especially in New York and Chicago. A platform of fourteen points was formulated at a general conference of the leaders, and provisional organizations were perfected in a number of cities. What power this latest attempt to enlist labor in partisan politics will assume is problematical. It is obviously inspired by European experiences and promulgated by socialistic propaganda. It has not succeeded in invading the American Federation of Labor, which did not formally endorse the movement at its Annual Convention in 1919. Gompers, in an intimate and moving speech, told a group of labor leaders gathered in New York on December 9, 1918, that "the organization of a political party would simply mean the dividing of the activities and allegiance of the men and women of labor between two bodies, such as would often come in conflict."

Under present conditions, it would appear that no Labor party could succeed in the United States without the coöperation of the American Federation of Labor.

The relation between the American Federation of Labor and the socialistic and political labor movements, as well as the monopolistic eagerness of the socialists to absorb these activities, is clearly indicated in Gompers's narrative of his experiences as an American labor representative at the London Conference of 1918. The following paragraphs are significant:

When the Inter-Allied Labor Conference opened in London, on September 17th, early in the morning, there were sent over to my room at the hotel cards which were intended to be the credential cards for our delegation to sign and hand in as our credentials. The cards read something like this: "The undersigned is a duly accredited delegate to the Inter-Allied Socialist Conference to be held at London," etc., and giving the dates.

I refused to sign my name, or permit my name to be put upon any card of that character. My associates were as indignant as I was and refused to sign any such credential. We went to the hall where the conference was to be held. There was a young lady at the door. When we made an effort to enter she asked for our cards. We said we had no cards to present. "Well,"

the answer came, "you cannot be admitted." We replied, "That may be true — we cannot be admitted — but we will not sign any such card. We have our credentials written out, signed, and sealed and will present them to any committee of the conference for scrutiny and recommendation, but we are not going to sign such a card."

Mr. Charles Bowerman, Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee of the British Trade Union Congress, at that moment emerged from the door. He asked why we had not entered. I told him the situation, and he persuaded the young lady to permit us to pass in. We entered the hall and presented our credentials. Mr. James Sexton, officer and representative of the Docker's Union of Liverpool, arose and called the attention of the Conference to this situation, and declared that the American Federation of Labor delegates refused to sign any such document. He said it was not an Inter-Allied *Socialist* Conference, but an Inter-Allied *Socialist and Labor* Conference.

Mr. Arthur Henderson, of the Labor Party, made an explanation something to this effect, if my memory serves me: "It is really regrettable that such an error should have been made. It was due to the fact that the old card of credentials which has been used in former conferences was sent to the printer, no one paying any attention to it, thinking it was all right."

I want to call your attention to the significance of that explanation, that is, that the trade union movement of Great Britain was represented at these former conferences, but at this conference the importance of

Labor was regarded as so insignificant that everybody took it for granted that it was perfectly all right to have the credential card read "Inter-Allied Socialist Conference" and with the omission of this more important term, "Labor."<sup>1</sup>

As one looks back upon the history of the workingman, one finds something impressive, even majestic, in the rise of the fourth estate from a humble place to one of power in this democratic nation. In this rise of fortune the laborer's union has unquestionably been a moving force, perhaps even the leading cause. At least this homogeneous mass of workingmen, guided by self-developed leadership, has aroused society to safeguard more carefully the individual needs of all its parts. Labor has awakened the state to a sense of responsibility for its great sins of neglect and has made it conscious of its social duties. Labor, like other elements of society, has often been selfish, narrow, vindictive; but it has also shown itself earnest and constructive. The conservative trades union, at the hour of this writing, stands as a bulwark between that amorphous, inefficient, irresponsible Socialism which has made Russia a lurid warning and Prussia a word of scorn, and that rational

<sup>1</sup> *American Federationist*, January, 1919, pp. 40-41.

social ideal which is founded upon the conviction that society is ultimately an organic spiritual unity, the blending of a thousand diverse interests whose justly combined labors and harmonized talents create civilization and develop culture.





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